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## Origin of Retreats for Religious

Augustine Klaas, S.J.

THE statement is sometimes made that retreats for religious originated in the sixteenth century with Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Historical facts, however, do not sustain this assertion.

It is true that, owing to the influence mainly of Saint Ignatius, and later of Saints Francis de Sales, Charles Borromeo, Vincent de Paul, and others, retreats for all classes of society flourished far and wide in the latter part of the sixteenth and especially in the seventeenth century—so much so that the seventeenth century could justly be called “the century of retreats.” It is also true, as Saint John Eudes, a zealous promoter of retreats, wrote specifically of religious in 1636, that a retreat is made “every year at least once in all religious communities in which piety and the love of God reign.”

Yet, if one examines the spiritual writers of the period as to the origin of these numerous retreats, he will find that almost unanimously they ascribe it, not to their own times, but to a far earlier period. They ascribe it to the primitive Church, even to Jesus Christ Himself. It was Christ, they say, who inaugurated retreats, particularly when He Himself made a forty days’ retreat in the desert before beginning His public life. Retreatants down the centuries have only imitated Him—the retreatant *par excellence*.

### *What History Says*

Already in the early third century we find Tertullian exhorting the persecuted and imprisoned Christians, among whom there were many religious, to make their

imprisonment a time of retreat.<sup>1</sup> The Lord Himself was very often in retreat, that He might pray more freely and withdraw from the world (Luke 4). Let us abolish the word prison; let us call it a retreat" (Migne, PL 1:623). Saint Gregory Nazianzen notes a century later that Christ "did not need a retreat," but He made it "that we might learn that there is a time for action and a time for more sublime employment" (PG 35:1238).

The most striking example of imitating Christ's retreat of forty days is that furnished by the monks of Palestine in the fifth century. During Lent they were not satisfied to imitate merely the Savior's fast, but were determined to emulate also His stay in the desert—and that *literally*.

The monk who inaugurated these annual Lenten retreats for religious in the Holy Land was Saint Euthymius, who died in 473 at the age of ninety-five. An Armenian by birth, he came to Palestine at twenty-nine and established himself about six miles from Jerusalem, near the laura of Pharan, a group of separate, independent, monastic cells under a common superior. Each year, from the octave of the Epiphany to Palm Sunday, he retired to the desert, at first with one companion, Theoctistus, and later with his disciples, Sabbas, Elias, Martyrios, Domitian, and many others. The desert was the identical, desolate region by the Dead Sea where our Lord had fasted, prayed, and was tempted by Satan. Here the monks dispersed and, with only wild animals for companionship, they spent their long retreat, fasting, doing strenuous penance, soul-searching, and communing with God. They called their retreat "a combat," and that is precisely what it was.

The length of the retreat varied. Thus, Saint Sabbas, the future abbot of all the hermit monks of Palestine, con-

<sup>1</sup>The word "religious" is applied to these early Christians, not in the technical sense of canon law, but in a wider sense, namely as persons who had dedicated themselves to God by taking private vows.

tinued the practice of his spiritual master, Euthymius, though he almost died of heat and thirst during his first retreats. However, he changed the date of beginning from the fourteenth to the twentieth of January, in order, he tells us candidly, that before his departure he might celebrate at the laura the feasts of Saint Antony and of Saint Euthymius—no doubt, to brace himself for the ordeal ahead! The retreats usually ended on Palm Sunday.

### *Monks in Retreat*

A vivid description of these Palestinian religious setting out for their annual retreat is found in the *Life of St. Mary of Egypt* (PG 87:3702-3), believed to have been written by Saint Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, who died in 638:

"On the first Sunday of Lent were celebrated publicly according to custom the holy mysteries, during which all the monks communicated of the unbloody and life-giving sacrifice. Afterwards they took a little breakfast. Then they assembled in the church, recited some long prayers accompanied with many genuflexions, and gave one another the kiss of peace. Singly they prostrated themselves at the feet of the abbot, asked his pardon for faults committed, and his blessing, that they might be assisted by his prayers during the impending combat.

"Now the door of the monastery was thrown open, and they went forth chanting in unison: 'The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? . . . ' (Psalm 26). One or two were ordinarily left behind to guard the monastery, not that they might protect what was stored up within, for there was nothing for thieves to steal, but that the church might not be without divine services.

"Each one saw to his own provisions as suited himself:

for his bodily needs, one took along a little bread; another, some figs; a third, some dates; a fourth, vegetables soaked in water. Some took nothing along with them except their bodies and the mantles they wore, and when nature should clamor for food, they purposed to eat the herbs which grow in the desert.

"Among them there existed an inviolable rule and law: one was not to know what austerity another practiced, nor what manner of life he led.

"Having crossed over the Jordan, they scattered far and wide, seeking complete isolation, so that they would not even meet one another. If it happened that any one saw another approaching in the distance, he would turn aside immediately and proceed in another direction. Each one lived for himself and for God, chanting the psalms incessantly and subsisting on the food he had with him.

"After they had spent the days of Lent in this fashion, they came back to the monastery on the Sunday preceding the life-giving resurrection of our Savior from the dead . . . Each returned bearing the personal fruit of his retreat and the testimony of his own conscience as to the manner in which he had conducted himself, and the fruits of labor he had harvested.

"No one, however, presumed to ask another how he had carried out his combat. Such was the rule of the monastery and it was observed perfectly. For in the desert every monk fought against himself with God as referee, not seeking to please men nor fasting out of ostentation, because what is done for the sake of men and from the desire to please them, far from being a help, is often the cause of great personal ruin."

#### *Abbot Zozimus in Retreat*

Naturally we are curious to know more in detail how

these religious spent their Lenten retreat in the desert wilderness by the Dead Sea. Sophronius tells us how the Abbot Zozimus, presumably a model monk, spent his time of retreat (PG 87:3703):

"According to the custom of the monastery, Zozimus also crossed the Jordan at the same time, carrying a modicum of provisions for necessary use, and only the garments he had on. There, as the rule prescribed, he wandered through the desert. To satisfy nature's demands, he had a set time for taking food, and wherever night overtook him, he lay down on the ground to snatch a little sleep. In the morning, he girded himself again for travel and gaily trudged onwards, desiring, as he afterwards narrated, to penetrate into the deep interior of the desert to find a certain Father living there who might guide him to what he aspired. And he walked fast, as though he were going to arrive soon at some famous hostelry. Thus he spent twenty days in travel. At the sixth hour, he slowed his pace somewhat, and turning towards the east, he recited his customary prayers. At certain times during the day he was also wont to interrupt the strain of walking by resting a little and praying and chanting psalms, now standing, now kneeling."

These Lenten retreats are the most notable example of retreats for religious in ancient times. They were not a mere passing episode. They continued on for centuries, surviving even the bitter Arab persecutions which destroyed so many Palestinian monasteries and decimated the monks. Gregory's *Life of Saint Lazarus*, an eleventh-century document, describes the desert retreats as still flourishing in that century.

### *Outside of Palestine*

Retreats for religious were by no means confined to

Palestine. All over the East we find religious withdrawing to greater seclusion and to a more penitential life during Lent.

The saintly monk, Macarius of Alexandria, who died about 393, used to remain the whole of Lent in the darkness of a windowless cell (PG 34:1059 C). A certain monk of the desert of Scete, in Egypt, was astonished to discover that he could seek spiritual direction from the venerable Poemen during the second week of Lent. "I almost decided not to come to you today," said the monk. "Why?" asked Poemen. "I was afraid that because of Lent you wouldn't open the door to me." "We have not been taught to close the wooden door," replied the old man, "but the door of the tongue" (PG 65:336). Saint Hypatius, the most influential monk in Constantinople at the beginning of the fifth century, made his annual Lenten retreat. And Saint Theodore of Sice, a very famous sixth-century monk of Galatia, later a bishop, began the custom of making an annual retreat in his home at the age of twelve, and kept it up throughout his life. From Epiphany to Palm Sunday, he used to retire to a cave, or an abandoned, uncomfortable hut without a roof, there to pray and do penance.

These are by no means exceptional, isolated cases: they are illustrative of a custom, widespread among religious throughout the East.

### *And in the West*

The practice is also found in the Western Church. Dynamius, in his life of Abbot Saint Marius, says that the Lenten retreat was common among the religious in Gaul in the sixth century. Saint Radegunde, foundress and abbess of the famous convent of the Holy Cross at Poitiers, is a notable example. Among the nuns of the eighth century

we may cite Saint Sigolena, Abbess of Troclar. Example after example can be adduced to show that religious, both men and women, in Italy, France, Brittany, the German Rhineland, England, and Ireland, spent the time of Lent in the silence and recollection of retreat. Let us conclude the list with Saint Bernard, who would not leave his monastery to meet his good friend William of Saint-Thierry, nor even to refute the false doctrines of Abelard, that he might not disturb the prayer and solitude of the Lenten retreat (PL 182:533). For the same reason he wrote shorter letters during Lent!

### *Purpose of the Retreats*

The purpose of these retreats was substantially that of our own retreats: the "noverim te, noverim me" of Saint Augustine—a deeper knowledge of God and of self. It was a time of greater seclusion, of more fervent prayer, of more intense spiritual life and activity. It was a looking back over the achievements and failures of the past year, and a looking forward with resolutions to a better year to come.

In the tenth century, John Tsimitzes addressed the monks of Mount Athos in Greece as follows: "We exhort all those who practise the ascetical life in monasteries, all those who live in community, to spend the time of Lent in recollection, and not to deal with each other except about important business, or when there is necessity, or on matters of conscience. Let no one go out to work, except on Saturdays, and let all be occupied solely in spiritual things."

Echoing Saint Augustine, Bishop Caesarius of Arles, one of the most illustrious monks of the early sixth century, states the general purpose of these Lenten retreats very clearly (PL 39:2019-21): "Although throughout the year, thanks be to God, we listened often and faith-

fully to the word of God, nevertheless during these days, when we have retired from the ocean storms of this world as to the haven of Lent, we must gather the divine word in the receptacle of our hearts amid silence and peace. And this we must do, in order that, occupied with eternal life, we may with the grace of God during these days repair leisurely and put in order all that has been broken, destroyed, damaged, or lost in the ship of our souls by the year's storms, that is, by the tempests of our sins." Then, changing the figure, he likens Lent to a time of spiritual harvest, a time when, by fasting, by reading, and by praying, we make provision for the future, and store up what the soul will live on for the following year. In a word, it is the opportune season to fill the spiritual barns and cellars of the soul.

### *Other Retreats Too*

Besides these long Lenten retreats for religious, so prominent in ancient Palestine, but also in vogue throughout the Eastern and Western Church, there were other retreats in use, of varying length—three, seven, or nine days. Notable in the monasteries were those following the religious profession, especially among the Benedictines and Carthusians.

Retreats were not confined to religious alone. Including the Lenten one, they were made in surprising numbers by bishops, diocesan priests, and even layfolk from the earliest times, the purpose being always the same, renewal of spirit and imitation of Christ. However, as we leave the Middle Ages and approach the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there is a marked decline in the making of retreats. May not that neglect have been one reason why the religious spirit of so many monasteries and convents was at a low ebb on the eve of the Reformation?



### Conclusion: Work of Ignatius

It is certain, then, that religious made retreats, quite like our own in purpose, long before the time of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The work of Ignatius lay mainly in injecting a new life into this potent spiritual means to perfection that had come to be neglected in religious houses and elsewhere, and in popularizing the making of retreats among all classes of society. This was noted by Saint Francis de Sales, who, in his *Treatise on the Love of God* (Lesson 12, chapter 8), lauds the retreat as "that holy device, familiar to the primitive Christians, but since almost completely abandoned, until the great servant of God, Ignatius of Loyola, restored it to use in the time of our Fathers." And Father Julius Nigronius, S.J., a 17th century authority on the history of retreats, cites with approval the judgment of his confrere Father John Lorinus: "If Saint Ignatius is not the originator, he is at least the restorer of the spiritual retreat."

This he accomplished, and it is his chief merit, by reducing the retreat to a definite method. Surely the spiritual ideas, doctrines, and practices of the *Spiritual Exercises* are not original; they are for the most part the common traditional ones of the Church. But the grouping and marshalling of them in logical sequence for a clear-cut end, and the striking psychological presentation of them, this was something the old retreats had lacked. And this was supplied by Ignatius in masterly fashion. He was not alone in this work, but his is the most important contribution to the nascent retreat movement which grew so vigorously during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This "second spring" of retreats has flowered and produced a fruitful harvest that still goes on increasing from year to year, to the immense spiritual benefit of religious and of the whole Church of God.

As Pius XI so aptly remarks in the Encyclical *Mens Nostra*: "Ignatius, in the little book he compiled when he was still without literary education, and to which he himself gave the title of Spiritual Exercises, was the first to trace a path, the first to teach a method of retreat, suitable to help marvellously the faithful to detest their sins and to model holily their lives according to the example of Jesus Christ. . . . The power of the Ignatian method, as Leo XIII affirmed, has been shown by the experience of three centuries, and by the testimony of all who, during that time, have distinguished themselves by their science of asceticism and sanctity of life . . ."

Thus Ignatius of Loyola merits the title bestowed upon him by Pius XI: Patron of Retreats in the Universal Church.

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#### For Deans of Summer Sessions

At about this time many religious throughout the country are beginning to consider their summer school programs. For some, of course, there is no difficulty, because their own institutes provide the educational facilities. Others, however, must go to outside schools. It has occurred to us that superiors who must send their subjects to outside schools might benefit by a summer session directory in our March and May numbers. We will gladly provide this service if the deans will send us the requisite information.

We cannot afford much space; hence we ask the deans to send us only a very brief statement comprizing the following points:

- a) Name of school.
- b) Courses that are of *special* interest or value to religious. (Evidently we cannot print a complete statement of all courses offered at the summer sessions. We wish to know *only* about those things that have a particular interest or value for religious.)
- c) Accommodations for religious who attend the summer school.
- d) Where to write for further information.

Deans who wish to have their announcement appear in the March number should send us the information immediately. Address: The Editors of REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas.

## General Councillors of a Religious Institute

Adam C. Ellis, S.J.

**I**T HAS ALWAYS been a part of the polity of the Church to provide that those who are given authority to govern in the name of the Church should have the benefit of the experience and wisdom of prudent men. The glory of God, the welfare of the Church, and the good of souls, are immeasurably promoted by the prudent counsel of good men. Thus the Sovereign Pontiff has his Senate of Cardinals; Bishops have their Chapter of Canons or board of Diocesan Consultors; Rectors of Seminaries have a two-fold council, one for discipline, the other for the administration of property. We are not surprised, therefore, but rather expect to find that the law of the Church should provide some sort of council for religious superiors. It does so in canon 516, § 1 of the Code of Canon Law, which reads as follows:

The superior general of every institute or monastic congregation, also every provincial superior, and local superior at least of every formal house, shall have their councillors, whose consent or counsel they must seek according to the terms of the constitutions and the sacred canons.

### *Appointment*

The Code does not determine how the general councillors are to be appointed. Hence the constitutions or customs of each institute will have to be consulted. Usually they are elected by the general chapter in conformity with the norms laid down in canon 101, § 1, 1°, of the Code of Canon Law. These norms require an *absolute majority* for an election on the first or second ballot: that is, *more than half* the valid votes cast. Thus 8 would constitute a

majority when 15 votes are cast. If no majority is obtained on the first or second ballot, a third and final ballot is taken in which a *relative majority* (plurality) will suffice for an election: that is, the person receiving the most votes of all the candidates will be elected, even though the number of votes he receives does not constitute an absolute majority, or more than half the votes cast.

In case two or more persons are tied for the relative majority on the third ballot, the senior by reason of ordination, of first profession, or of age, is considered to be elected. In clerical institutes ordination will determine the seniority; in non-clerical institutes the date of first profession, and, in case the persons concerned made their profession on the same day, the senior by reason of age will be considered as elected.

The first person to be elected councillor is commonly also the assistant or vicar of the superior general, and takes the place of the latter when he is absent or impeded from the exercise of his office. It is also usual to allow any one of the other councillors, but not the first, to hold the office of secretary general.

### *Term of Office*

When general councillors are elected to office in a general chapter, they remain in office until the next general chapter of elections takes place. Usually their term of office coincides with that of the superior general to whose council they have been elected. However, should the superior general resign, or die during his term of office, the assistant or vicar (first councillor) will take the place of the superior general and convoke a general chapter of elections. All the councillors continue in office until this general chapter convenes to elect a new superior general. After his election the general chapter will proceed to the election

of his general councillors.

The general law of the Church places no restrictions on the repeated election of the same persons as general councillors. Sometimes the constitutions of individual institutes limit their capacity to two or three successive terms of office.

General councillors may not be removed from office except for a grave cause, and most constitutions require the deliberative vote of the council, as well as the subsequent approval of the Holy See, for such a course of action.

### *Duties of General Councillors*

General councillors enjoy no authority merely by reason of their office. They are not commissioned with the government of the institute; but it is their special and principal duty to give advice and aid to the superior general in the government and administration of the entire institute. They have the right and the duty to give a deliberative or consultative vote in matters to be submitted to them as prescribed by canon law or by the constitutions. Each may likewise suggest to the superior general that certain matters which he judges important and for the good of the institute be submitted to the general council for discussion.

Superiors are not *limited* in seeking the advice of their council to the cases in which the Code of Canon Law or the constitutions require them to do so. They may and should consult their council on all matters of great moment.

The *Normae* of 1901 required that the general councillors reside with the superior general, though they allowed two of them to reside elsewhere, provided that they could easily be present at council meetings when needed (Art. 276). Furthermore, councillors were forbidden to hold any office which might impede their principal duty of

assisting the superior general with advice and counsel (Art. 279); specifically, they were prohibited from holding the office of bursar or treasurer general (Art. 284), as well as that of master of novices (Art. 300). These provisions are found today in most constitutions of congregations approved by the Holy See, although they are not contained in the Code.

A councillor, though not enjoying any authority by reason of his office, may be given a share in the authority of the superior general in certain matters if the constitutions do not prohibit it. Or he may be given another office which carries authority with it, such as that of local superior.

### *Council Meetings*

The Code does not determine when or how often the superior must call meetings of his council. Constitutions usually prescribe that the general council meet once a month, and oftener when need shall require.

In council meetings it is customary for the superior general to propose a subject for consideration and, after having given whatever information is required for a proper understanding of it, to ask the opinion of the councillors. It is advisable (and sometimes required by the constitutions) to ask the youngest councillor first, then the others in order, and to have the superior general give his opinion last, so as not to influence the councillors by any undue regard for the opinion of their elders.

After a reasonable time has been devoted to discussing the subject under consideration, a vote is taken. This vote may be either deliberative or consultative, oral or secret.

*Deliberative vote:* In certain matters the Code of Canon Law or the constitutions require the *consent* of his council before the superior can act *validly*. A vote taken in

such cases is called a deliberative or decisive vote, in contradistinction to a merely consultative vote. The vote of the council decides the matter, and the superior must follow the majority vote of his council in order to act validly. Here are the canons of the Code in which a deliberative vote of the council is required:

516, § 4: for the appointment of bursars or treasurers, when the constitutions make no provision for their appointment;

534, § 1: for the alienation of property, and for the contracting of debts, even though the permission of the Holy See is not required;

575, § 2: for the admission of a novice to first temporary profession of vows;

647, 650, and 653: for all cases of dismissal of religious, whether they have temporary or perpetual vows.

Furthermore, *in practice*, the Sacred Congregation of Religious demands the consent of the general council for all matters requiring the permission of the Holy See.

*Consultative vote:* The vote of the chapter is said to be only consultative when the superior is obliged indeed by the law of the Church or by the constitutions to ask the advice of his council, but can act validly even if he does not follow the advice given. Canon 105, however, admonishes superiors "to make much of the unanimous opinion of those to be heard, and not to depart from it without a weightier reason, of which they are the judge."

Thus, canon 543 requires at least a consultative vote of the council for the admission of candidates to the novitiate, as well as for profession in general, subject to the restrictions of canon 575, § 2, which states explicitly that the vote of the council is deliberative for the *first temporary* profession of vows, but only consultative for the subse-

quent perpetual profession, whether of simple or solemn VOWS.

It may be well to consider here just how far the constitutions may require more in this matter than is required by the law of the Church. These general rules may help to answer the question:

1. Evidently the constitutions may contain provisions regarding matters not determined by or contained in the Code, for example, the number of consultors. Such a provision is said to be outside (or beyond) the law (*praeter ius*).

2. The constitutions may not contain provisions *contrary* to the Code (*contra ius*), for example, they may not exempt the superior from asking the vote of his council when the Code requires it; nor may they *allow less* than the Code demands (*infra ius*): for instance, they may not prescribe only a consultative vote when the Code requires a deliberative vote.

3. The constitutions may be *stricter* than the Code (*supra ius*), provided they are not contrary to it. Thus canon 543 requires the vote of the council or chapter for admission to the novitiate, as well as for the subsequent profession of vows. The constitutions may require that the vote of the council or chapter be deliberative for the admission of candidates to the novitiate. However, canon 575, § 2 defines the nature of the vote of the council or chapter in two cases: for the *first* profession of temporary vows, the vote is deliberative; for the profession of perpetual vows, whether simple or solemn, the vote is consultative *only*. Hence the constitutions may not require that the vote of the council or chapter be deliberative for the final profession. That would be not only stricter than the Code, but *contrary* to it. All provisions of constitutions which are contrary to the Code were abrogated



by the Code itself (canon 489), and a special privilege would have to be obtained from the Holy See in order to retain them.

Again, in some institutes temporary vows are taken, not for a period of three years, but for one year only, to be renewed for a year on two successive occasions. The Code requires the deliberative vote of the council for the *first* profession of such temporary vows, but says nothing about the nature of the vote for the annual *renewal* of such temporary vows. Hence the constitutions may determine whether this vote is deliberative or merely consultative.

*Oral or secret vote:* Ordinary matters in which the advice of the council is sought by the superior general are discussed orally and opinions are expressed verbally. Even when the consent of the council is required by law, it is not demanded that a secret vote be taken, except in the case of contracting debts or alienating property (canon 534, § 1), and in all cases of dismissal of religious with temporary vows (canon 647, § 1). Constitutions frequently call for a secret vote in other matters, as in the appointment of local superiors, and at times give the councillors the right to demand a secret vote in any important matter.

The *secretary general* is present at all council meetings, without vote, however, unless he be a councillor. It is his duty to record the deliberations and decisions arrived at, to be read and approved at the following meeting and signed by the superior and the secretary.

### *Spirit of Consultation*

All persons whose consent or advice is asked, should state their opinion with due respect, truthfulness, and sincerity (canon 105, 3°).

*They should state their opinion:* that is, they must give an opinion for or against the measure in question when their *consent* is required by the law or the constitu-

tions for the validity of the superior's act; they may decline to give an opinion if they have nothing worth while to contribute to the discussion when the superior is only obliged to *hear his council*, that is, to listen to and consider their advice.

Councillors should always remember that they are but advisors of their superior, to whom *reverence* is due. When they find it necessary to express an opinion contrary to that of their superior, it should be given with all due respect, without acrimony, in simple but dignified language. *Truthfulness* means not merely the avoidance of all that is false, but especially the positive disclosure of facts and circumstances that are relevant to the matter under discussion. *Sincerity* implies a candid and genuine expression of opinion, and excludes all dissimulation or pretence, even though motivated by a desire not to displease the superior.

On his part the superior who is obliged by the law of the Church or by the constitutions to seek the advice or to obtain the consent of his council should do so willingly and even eagerly, since it is for his benefit as well as for the common good that the Church has established its system of councillors for all those who exercise authority in her name. To try to influence his councillors in such a way as to impose his opinion upon them, or to give them the impression that he considers the council meeting a mere formality, would show that the superior does not understand the spirit of the law.

### *Provincial Councillors*

What has been said regarding general councillors may and should be applied to provincial councillors within the scope of their activity as defined by the constitutions. They are usually appointed by the superior general and his council, but in some institutes they are elected in a pro-

vincial chapter. Their number is usually four, and the constitutions determine how often they meet, as well as the nature of their vote.

Matters usually referred to the provincial council by the constitutions include the following: admission of candidates to the novitiate; admission of novices to first vows; dismissal of novices; admission to perpetual vows; alienation of property and the incurring of debts by the province or by the houses of the province; investment of dowries; all matters which must be referred to the Holy See for permission or approval.

### *Local Councillors*

Canon 516, § 1 requires them *at least for formal houses*, those, namely, which have at least six professed religious in the community, four of whom must be priests in the case of a clerical institute (canon 488, 5°). The "at least" of the canon implies that they are desirable also in a smaller community, but are not strictly of obligation. Usually they number four in larger communities, and not less than two in smaller ones. They are appointed by the superior general and his council, or by the provincial superior and his council in institutes which are divided into provinces. The matters in which their counsel or consent must be had by the local superior are defined by the constitutions.

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## Towards Simplified Affective Prayer

Robert B. Eiten, S.J.

THE purpose of the present article is to offer some suggestions for disposing a soul to reach simplified affective prayer or to grow in such prayer, if one has already attained it. Of course, not all these suggestions can be used by everyone. The important thing is that everyone who desires to advance in prayer will follow those suggestions that help him and then set about to *pray*, and *pray*, and *pray some more*. Only thus does one normally advance in prayer.

The realization of God's presence is perhaps the first step towards successful prayer. Of course, we know by faith that God is present everywhere in and about us and that, when we are in the state of grace, He dwells within us as in His temple; yet, unless we have received mystical graces, we must frequently recall this marvellous presence and try as far as possible to get a habitual realization of it. Otherwise while at prayer we may fail to realize sufficiently His presence. We do not see God, we do not touch Him. All these pleasant experiences connected with our sense life are not ours in addressing God. Yet by faith we know that He is most near.

Our faculties of prayer, the imagination, memory, intellect, and will, have their natural objects towards which they have a natural affinity and in which they find pleasure when they are exercised. It is hard to pull these faculties away from natural objects. Much self-control and self-denial are required to withdraw them from things naturally pleasing to them and to direct them to that (the Divine)

towards which they have little or no natural attraction or spontaneity in the beginning.

When we speak to God in prayer we cannot see Him and it is no easy task to hear His whispered inspirations. But we must try to *realize* His presence. This certainly is possible. I can be most aware of another person's presence in the dark even though I do not hear him speak, nor see him nor even hear any movements of his, nor touch him. It is sufficient that some trustworthy person tell me of the presence of this third person.

It is not strange, then, that a great saint insisted that at the beginning of our mental prayer we should recall God's presence. Much of our success and progress in mental prayer will largely depend upon our growing realization of God's presence. If we fail to make God, our loving Father, vivid and right at hand with us, our prayer will most likely be strained, and lack a familiar touch and spontaneity. Much care, thought, and concentration should be devoted to developing within ourselves the realization of the Blessed Trinity's indwelling. Briefly, our psychological dispositions toward God must be made so realistic that we act almost as if we saw Him, touched Him, and so forth. Then prayer will be easier and carried on with greater relish.

It will ordinarily take a long time to arrive at the point where we instinctively, as it were, live in God's presence. And here I am not referring to the presence of God as felt through mystical graces. Perhaps one of the best ways to arrive at this state is to meditate frequently on the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity and to direct all our ejaculations to that indwelling Guest. Long, careful, and repeated striving and practice will bear fruit. What a grace it would be if we could experience habitually all day long the reality and consciousness of God's indwelling as we experience

His presence when we are before the tabernacle in church!

Many who have been sacristans or who have had occasion to work inside a church certainly have had this practically constant and subconscious awareness of God's presence. It resembles the awareness which a child, although much occupied in playing with his toys, has of his mother, who is perhaps busy in the next room of the home.

Our realization of Christ's presence in the tabernacle began in early childhood. Our mothers constantly hushed us when we babbled out in church. Then they pointed to the tabernacle and tried to tell us most simply who was there. With other training in this matter, we gradually formed a sort of instinct or conditioned reflex whereby we came to an active and spontaneous realization of God's presence whenever we were in church.

Heart-to-heart chatting with our indwelling Guest will help not a little to obtain this rather spontaneous awareness and living experience of His presence. This will bring us to St. Teresa's conception of mental prayer, which she says, "is nothing else but an intimate friendship, a frequent converse, heart to heart, with Him Whom we know to be our Lover."

Again, how we experience God's presence after Holy Communion! We are very self-conscious of the necessity of being by ourselves, alone and recollected. Why cannot good habits directing our thoughts and affections to the indwelling Trinity bring similar results? True, this is not usually a work of a few weeks or months, and ordinarily much patience, calm, and protracted effort is required.

A soul that has reached this *active* realization of God's presence will instinctively upon waking in the morning turn its first thoughts to God. Outside of formal spiritual exercises such a soul, while walking or unoccupied with other mental work, is rather instinctively taken up with

God's sweet presence. This soul too is always seeking times and opportunities for spiritual reading and visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Even during the various duties of the day such a soul is very frequently aware of God's abiding presence. Obviously such a soul during formal mental prayer is quite taken up with God since its every impulse, even outside of prayer, is towards a continuous and affectionate abiding with God.

At prayer we should not be afraid to interrupt *our part* of prayer to listen quietly to God. We must permit God to have His part in our chat with Him. He will do His part by His silent inspirations. We must get into the habit of making these attentive pauses. For beginners they should be short. Later on it will be easier to lengthen them either because of habits acquired here or because of an attraction for recollection. At any rate, let us rest in them as long as we find profit.

In the beginning, if we experience little or no results, we should not become wearied or distrustful. Patience will win out and have its day of harvest. In any case these pauses are not a waste of time. At least, they are made with a good intention, and this makes them pleasing to God. Moreover, to summarize de Caussade, they imply many other good acts. For example, they include an act of faith in the presence, the power, and the mercy of God, and an act of hope, for we await only that which we hope for. The pauses further imply contempt of ourselves and great confidence in God, since during these pauses we suspend our own mental acts only because we count very little on our own and very much on God's. Finally they imply deep humility, as well as resignation and surrender, since we remain before God in silence either to be heard or refused and in spite of all the distractions, tedium, and weariness which make these attentive pauses at times wearisome,

tedious, and distressing. (See de Caussade, *On Prayer*, pp. 210-211.)

Some persons think erroneously that their prayer is of little worth unless they are in a continual interior activity or movement, piling reflection on reflection, prayer on prayer, act on act. It would be well for these people to realize that the more important part of prayer is rather the attention of the heart.

Let us learn, then, to rest in God in silence, peace, and attention, especially when He seems to invite us to this holy repose of soul. This may happen outside our formal prayer, as during Mass, spiritual reading, and so forth. Always bear in mind that this is a favorable moment, not for talking to God, but rather for listening to Him, not for acting as we ordinarily do, but rather for simply abiding in God's presence and being receptive to all He works in us. Let us try then to enjoy His presence as a mother will quietly and in silence at times enjoy the presence of her soldier-son, who, after being a long time away, has now returned home. To sit merely in his presence is a real thrill for her. Would anyone be so rash as to deny that this mother, although silent externally, is without any mental or affective activity? What maternal love is active in her heart! Although she does not reflect that she is loving him, nevertheless that love is there in a sublime way. She loves him without saying anything. And if her son saw her heart, what actual tenderness he would find there, what depths of deliberate and freely accepted, although non-reflective, emotions he would see! Thus, in this apparent idleness there is a height of activity. This same height of activity can be present if, imitating this mother, we quietly rest and enjoy God's presence.

Another helpful means for progress in prayer is to repeat slowly, affectionately, and with relish some aspira-



tion, be it one's own or another's, or some Scripture text, over some period of time. While this is being done we ought to ponder over it carefully, as well as sense and relish it in its complete significance. It is related of St. Francis of Assisi that he spent an entire night in prayer uttering very slowly, but with great devotion and relish, the following sublime words: "My God and my All!"

It is easy to see how this practice can be a beginning, or at least an approach, to the prayer of simplicity; for, although there may be various affections occurring, there is one predominant one whose object is, as it were, a *fixed idea* about which our other ideas and affections are pivoted. This seems to be little more than an extension of St. Ignatius' second method of prayer. Or even better, it is in some respects a combination of, or a variation between, St. Ignatius' second and third methods of prayer.

In his second method of prayer St. Ignatius recommends that we leisurely meditate on the *Our Father*, or any other prayer, by dwelling on it word by word as long as we find meanings, comparisons, relish and consolation in such considerations; while in his third method of prayer he suggests that we recite the *Our Father*, or any other prayer, in such a way that by properly synchronized rhythm only one word is said between one breath and another, and while the time from one breath to another lasts, [one gives attention] to the meaning of such word, or to the person to whom he recites it, or to his own baseness, or to the difference from such great height to his own so great lowness. Of course this rhythmic interchange between word and affectionate thought must not be taken too literally or mathematically.

It is important for anyone aiming at high sanctity and progressive prayer to have recourse to God in all difficulties, joys, and so forth, by informal ejaculatory prayer. (See

REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, Sept., 1943, p. 305.) This can be reduced to an attitude resulting from the habit of talking familiarly with God as with anyone who is constantly around us. He becomes our constant *vade mecum*. Why not act on this principle by familiarly talking with Him frequently as we would with a friend who never left our side? In this practice one must, of course, avoid brain-fag. This latter can be largely obviated if, rather than trying to imagine too vividly God's presence, we simply take it for granted. This obviously is not the work of a day; but when acquired, it will immeasurably help our prayer-life.

Our progress in prayer is also helped by repeating the same meditations several times. After several reflections we find that the intellectual part of our prayer has been considerably diminished while the affective part has considerably increased. It can in many cases end in an affectionate, loving, and protracted gaze upon God or some divine mystery that would be simplified affective prayer.

In general, it is well, after we have been accustomed for some time to mental prayer, to lessen gradually the discursive element. Though it is profitable, while meditating on the mysteries of Christ's life, to reason and weigh various facts, motives, and so forth, yet, other things being equal, we should not weary ourselves too much by trying to fathom these divers points. Let us rather remain in peace near our Lord.

"The soul should then be occupied according to her ability in reflecting that He is looking at her; she will keep Him company and will address her petitions to Him" (St. Teresa, *Life*, ch. 12). We ought to endeavor gradually to lessen our considerations both in length and number, and accustom ourselves "to go through the mysteries of our Lord by merely glancing at them, rather than by meditating upon them, and to make use of their different circumstances

to excite in our soul acts of love, gratitude, humility, or similar affections" (Lehodey, *The Ways of Mental Prayer*, p. 187). In this way our prayer will gradually become a simple loving gaze at God or divine things. No longer will the soul be seeking for truth as in meditation, for, now possessing it, the soul rests in it with love. *It looks and it loves*—that is the soul's chief preoccupation. Grasping things now by intuition and immediately rather than by the long, toilsome, and roundabout ways of the imagination, the memory and the understanding, the soul perceives the things of God almost as we perceive first principles.

"We remember, we look, we attend, and this is enough. This does not hinder this view from being sometimes more luminous, sometimes weaker and more veiled. By its very nature it is somewhat obscure and confused, because it proceeds mostly by way of general views, not stopping at details, pretty much as we take in at a single glance a whole landscape.

"This simple look is always accompanied with love—a love, it may be, almost imperceptible or all on fire, calm or impetuous, bitter or savoury . . . We look because we love, we look in order to love, and our love is fed and inflamed by looking" (Lehodey, *The Ways of Mental Prayer*, p. 193). Both our looking and loving mutually help each other.

In the beginning of the spiritual life we reason and meditate. But after we have grasped our Lord's beautiful character we sit at His feet with Mary Magdalene to look at Him that we may love Him more, and our love in turn makes us want never to take our eyes from Him. "He is all mine and I am all His."

It is often helpful after preparing our prayer to go before the Blessed Sacrament (it can be done elsewhere too) and let our Lord speak to us on the matter prepared. Ask

Him to develop the subject for us. Ask Him to let us know His mind on the subject. It is really surprising how many new angles and lights He sometimes suggests. It is, besides, a very reposeful prayer, to say nothing of its being very simple and affective.

Balthasar Alvarez, who directed St. Teresa and who, according to the latter, was more advanced in prayer than she, thus describes what we have been trying to say: "To pray is to raise our heart to God; to communicate with Him familiarly, though with great respect, regarding all our affairs; to confide in Him more than a child confides in his mother, however good she may be; to offer Him all that we possess, all that we hope for, without any reserve; to open our heart to Him, and pour it out, as it were, before Him; to speak to Him of our labours, of our sins, of our desires, our projects, and all that occupies our mind; finally, to seek in Him our consolation and our repose, as one friend with another, in whom he has full confidence" (*Life of Fr. Balthazar Alvarez*, vol. 1, p. 175).

The burden of this entire article has been to show ways and means of quickly disposing ourselves to reach simplified affective prayer as well as to grow in it. Still, we must be on our guard against outrunning grace with the result that we are like a boy in a class beyond his intellectual years. We must avoid either extreme, the tendency to go too slowly and the impulse to jump too fast from ordinary meditation to affective prayer, or from affective prayer to simplified affective prayer.

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#### A Good Book for March

For reading during the month of March, we suggest *The Man Nearest to Christ*, by F. L. Filas, S.J. It provides interesting and valuable material on St. Joseph. Published by Bruce, Milwaukee. Price: \$2.50.

## Some Thoughts on the Holy Family

Francis L. Filas, S.J.

**O**WING to limitations of space meditation manuals usually present only two or three points for meditation on the hidden life of the Holy Family and do not enter on the subject at greater length. Yet since the richness and utility of this meditation call for more detailed treatment, we shall bring together in this article the ideas ordinarily proposed and at the same time shall endeavor to suggest several new avenues of thought.

Above all else, meditation on the Holy Family finds its usefulness in its direct, many-sided application to the religious life. The religious life is essentially a hidden and obscure life, in which the interior efforts God alone sees (and not necessarily outward results) are the hallmark of success. It has its long periods of difficult preparation such as the postulancy, the novitiate, and years of study—years that may appear utterly useless at the moment. At certain times temptations to discouragement arise because of a lack of tangible results. For the inspiration to advance steadfastly amid all such circumstances there is no antidote or tonic better than the example of the hidden life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Perhaps we do not sufficiently associate the hidden life of Christ with the life of the Holy Family; yet the one is actually a part of the other, as Leo XIII wrote: "In the veneration of the Holy Family the faithful rightly understand that they are reverencing the mystery of the hidden life which Christ led together with His virgin mother and

St. Joseph."\* It is from this that the meditation derives so much of its richness.

Then, too, it offers healthy variety. Whatever consideration we select can be projected against any of six or seven aspects, according as we feel inclined at the moment. We can look at the relations of Jesus to Mary or Joseph; of Mary to Jesus or Joseph; of Joseph to Jesus or Mary; or finally, at the union of these three holiest of persons as the "earthly trinity." This opportunity of contemplating the same truth from different angles is of great psychological value, for the mind quickly becomes fatigued if its attention is focused unswervingly on only one facet of a given subject.

The meditation falls into two salient divisions: the *fact* of the hidden life of the Holy Family, and the *multiple lessons* it teaches. Its Gospel text is, of course, that of St. Luke (2:51, 52), "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them; and His mother kept all these things carefully in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men."

### *The Fact*

*Jesus Christ*—the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who took to Himself human nature—whose mission was the redemption of mankind by means of suffering and a painful death—who came to teach mankind the difficult law of brotherly love—to found a Church that would last for all time as the only certain road to salvation—who would draw men to embrace a moral code of self-denial and even suffering for the love of God.

*With this tremendous task before Him* Jesus spent ten

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\*Further information on the nature and history of the devotion to the Holy Family is contained in the author's article in REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, January 15, 1944.

times as much of His life in obscurity as in His public apostolate—because it was the will of His Father in heaven.

*Only two persons* were His intimate and constant companions during this period—Mary and Joseph.

*Mary*—the Mother of God—God's choicest handiwork among mere creatures—who lived with Jesus in the intimacy of mother with son—in obscurity because He willed it—the second Eve, united with Him in His work of redemption as the first Eve was united with Adam in the first sin.

*Joseph*—the only man who ever received the virginal conjugal love of Mary and the filial submission of Jesus—truly the virginal husband of the Mother of God and the virginal foster-father of the Son of God—buried in obscurity because Jesus willed it—and realizing perhaps that this obscurity must be continued in the life of the Church for more than a thousand years, lest the recognition of the foster-father hinder the recognition of Christ's divinity and Mary's virginity.

*The Holy Family*—a true family supported by Joseph its head—mothered by the perfect mother—preparing the Lamb for the sacrifice—the Child and Son in this family like to us in all things, sin alone excepted.

### *The Lessons*

*Obedience and use of authority:* Jesus with His divine wisdom often knows a "better way," but does He refuse to obey Mary and Joseph?—Mary has the unsurpassed holiness and dignity that befit the Mother of God, but is she any less submissive to her husband and head of the family?—How great must be the worth of Joseph, to be put in charge of Jesus and Mary, as the representative on earth of the Eternal Father!—See how prudently Joseph uses his authority, recognizing that its source rests in no intrinsic

superiority or merit of his own but on the will of God!

*The value of labor and of works of charity:* Jesus works for Mary and Joseph diligently, in a spirit of cooperation, and with a willingness to take up any task assigned Him.—Mary and Joseph work for Jesus; was ever labor done more perfectly “all for Jesus”?—If a cup of water offered in Christ’s name is to receive its reward, what must be the merit of these two great souls directly employed in Christ’s personal service? Yet even this their privilege is not all-exclusive, for we can always remember that what we do for the least of Christ’s brethren, we do to Christ—in imitation of Mary and Joseph.

*Life of obscurity:* The actual fact is that for thirty years Christ hid Himself from the public view. For our instruction and for the success of His own future ministry, Christ shows the need of conformity to God’s will even if it means giving up the external works of the apostolate.—If God wishes to accomplish great work for souls through our efforts, the one essential condition is that we be conformed to His will, united to Him.—Then, too, there is only one soul over which we have direct power, and that is our own. All others we can help or guide only indirectly, for God with His grace does the work, using us as instruments.—If our life is obscure according to God’s will (we may be spending months and years in preparation for the active apostolate, or on the other hand our time of labor may be cut short by sickness or old age), we should not fret because of the apparent uselessness of our efforts. They are highly meritorious for ourselves and for others precisely because they are done according to God’s will.—They can be far more selfless than prayers united with an exterior action in which we have succeeded and semi-deliberately take the credit for ourselves.—We lose only self-love in God-willed obscurity.



If we are spending ourselves in a public apostolate such as the hospital or classroom, our interior life ever remains hidden and obscure, known only to the Father from whom we derive the strength and inspiration to labor in His service, and from whom will come the reward that is Himself.—To imitate the hidden life that Christ led, we look to the two persons who followed Him most closely, Mary and Joseph.

*Charity:* Jesus, the perfect Son; Mary, the perfect wife and mother; Joseph, the perfect husband and father: need more be said to describe the bond of love that existed at Nazareth, our ideal to imitate?

*Prayer:* At Nazareth we see the value of the contemplative apostolate, as well as the background of prayer that is so essential in supporting and making fruitful the works of the mixed apostolate.—Our novitiate, our annual retreat, monthly recollection, daily meditation, and exams, are all so many times when we “go down to Nazareth” to pray.—“Whoever wants a master to teach him how to pray, let him take St. Joseph for his guide, and he will not lose his way” (St. Teresa of Avila).—Mary is the mediatrix of all graces, whose prayer God can never refuse, who as St. Luke says (2:52), pondered “all these things carefully in her heart.”—Jesus here at Nazareth is preparing Himself by praying during a period ten times as long as His public life—and even in His public life and Passion He prayed before and during every action.

To pray is to raise the mind and heart to God, to put oneself consciously in God’s presence. Mary and Joseph were ever in the bodily presence of Jesus; can we doubt that the house at Nazareth was a house of prayer?—We marvel at this privilege of Mary and Joseph; do we appreciate and utilize to the full our privilege of being in the bodily presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament?

*Family virtues:* If the Holy Family is the patron of the Christian family, it is no less the exemplar for all families of religious. We have the love and concord that existed at Nazareth to show us how we should live our religious family life.—In imitating the family virtues that were exemplified at Nazareth, we may well offer our own efforts in conjunction with those of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, begging God to protect and bless the families of our Church and nation.

*Triple Colloquy:* with Joseph, Mary, and Jesus—"By Joseph we are led to Mary, and by Mary to Jesus" (Benedict XV).—No one, save Jesus, ever loved Mary more than did Joseph; his greatness comes from his union with her and Jesus—can there be a greater proponent of devotion to Mary?—No human person ever loved Jesus more than did Mary; can there be a surer way of coming to the Son than through the Mother?—"Jesus, Mary, Joseph, be with us now and at the hour of our death!"

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## Books Received

(From October 20 to December 20)

THE BRUCE PUBLISHING CO., Milwaukee.

*War Is My Parish.* By Dorothy Fremont Grant. \$2.25. *A Realistic Philosophy.* By K. F. Reinhardt, Ph. D. \$2.75. *The Man Nearest to Christ.* By the Reverend F. L. Filas, S.J. \$2.50.

THE NEWMAN BOOKSHOP, Westminster, Md.

*With the Help of Thy Grace.* By the Reverend John V. Matthews, S.J., S.T.D., Mag. Agg. (Pont. Greg. Univ.). \$1.50. *Our Lady of Fatima.* By the Most Reverend Finbar Ryan, O.P. \$1.25.

SHEED & WARD, New York.

*Secrets of the Saints.* By Henri Gheon. \$3.00. *Speaking of How to Pray.* By Mary Perkins. \$2.75.

GEORGE GILL & SONS, LTD., London.

*A Heroine of the Mission Field.* By Dom Romanus Rios, O.S.B. \$1.00.

ST. PAUL'S PRIORY, Keyport, New Jersey.

*Symbols of Christ.* Volume I: The Old Testament. By the Reverend Damasus Winzen, O.S.B. \$1.00.

## The Daily Examination of Conscience

James A. Kleist, S.J.

**R**ELIGIOUS are accustomed to make a daily examination of conscience. In some communities the rule prescribes two such examinations: one at noon, the other in the evening. The time allowed for the exercise varies in different institutes, but never, so far as I know, exceeds fifteen minutes. It is not to my present purpose to stress the importance of this spiritual exercise, beyond saying that it is intended, not only to cleanse the soul from blemishes contracted during the part of the day which it covers, but also to pave the way for a definite improvement of the whole tone of one's spiritual life.

My immediate purpose is to enlarge upon a particular method of conducting this inquiry into the state of one's soul. The fifteen minutes at our disposal pass swiftly, and they are either fruitfully spent or frittered away without results. To avoid such loss of time, it is well to have a definite method, for example, that recommended by St. Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises*.

"The method for making the general examen," says the saint, "has five points in it. The first point is to give thanks to God our Lord for the benefits received." It was a stroke of genius for the saint to advise opening the unpleasant business of examining our conscience with an act of thanksgiving to God, the Supreme Judge, who is either to ratify or to reject our findings. We are to thank "God our Lord." God is infinite in all His perfections. He is holy, almighty, immense, everlasting, just, sovereign in every respect. He is.

moreover, supremely happy. And yet, He created the world, and us, who live in the world. He willed to be "our Lord." Vainly shall we try to understand fully God's reasons for creating. What we do know for certain is that He wished to share His happiness with other beings, with finite creatures. To enable us to reach this end He has endowed us with marvellous faculties, both of body and of soul. Moreover, He so directed the course of events from the beginning that the world might almost seem to be created for each one of us individually. The psalms cannot say enough of His Providence, which looks after the tiniest details of our lives. When mankind failed to cooperate with His original beneficent designs, even then He was not turned aside: He sent His Only-begotten Son into the world to restore us to grace. Besides these general blessings, each one of us can tell of special graces showered upon him. No need of going into details; but we must not overlook the blessings received on the particular day when the examen is made.

Thus far our minds have been busy with a rapid survey of God's goodness toward us. But we have not yet complied with St. Ignatius's first point. We have not yet "thanked God our Lord." Evidently, we must do more than merely rehearse our Benefactor's kindly deeds. The next and altogether necessary step, then, is to find words appropriate to the praise of God our Lord. This is the problem of the first point. I might solve it by saying that each one is best qualified to find words to express his thanks. Or I might suggest the use of the psalms, those great store-houses of devout aspirations. But just now I prefer to recommend the use of the Roman Missal, especially the Ordinary of the Mass, for fitting expressions of gratitude. Many prayers of the Mass have been in use for fifteen hundred years, or even more. Its words come to us laden

with an unction which nothing else can rival, except, of course, the words of Holy Writ. A further advantage is that, if we cull our ejaculations from the Mass, we feel ourselves in communion with the whole Church. We speak not merely as individuals, but as God's "holy people." This is an important point, as we shall see presently.

To begin with, we may repeat the Church's doxology: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit." Again, we may recite the tuneful opening of the Preface: "Truly fitting it is and just, truly right and wholesome for the soul, that we should, in every place and time, give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Omnipotent Father, Eternal God." Then there are the urgent declarations of the Gloria: "We praise Thee! We bless Thee! We adore Thee! We glorify Thee! We give Thee thanks for Thy great glory!" Again, we may turn to our Blessed Lord in particular, and say the beautiful ending of that song of the angels: "Thou alone art holy; Thou alone art Lord; Thou alone art Most High, O Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father." A well-known text from St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians occurs in several Introits: "In the name of Jesus every knee shall bend, of beings in heaven, of beings on earth, of beings in the world below; and every tongue shall confess, to the Father's glory, that Jesus Christ is Lord." Again, there is not a priest but feels a touch of solemnity when he says at the "little elevation": "Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, *all honor and glory* redounds to Thee, O God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Spirit." In our examination of conscience, why not make the priest's words our own?

We thus conclude the first of the five points. What counts is not so much a multiplicity of prayers as a deep-felt desire to pour out our thanks to God for all the benefits

received. The prayers suggested above will be helpful, unless we have still better ones suited to our individual temperament. I said a while ago that it was important for us to feel ourselves in communion with the whole Church whenever we pray. It is significant that her prayers are couched in the plural number. Are there not millions and millions of men and women who breathe God's air and have their daily bread from God, but never have a word of thanks for Him?

Briefly, then: while the mind takes a rapid view of God's blessings, the heart is constantly and devoutly engaged in prayer.

"The second point," says St. Ignatius, "is to ask grace to know our sins and cast them out." How well the saint understood the paramount place which divine grace holds in the sanctification of the soul! "Without me you can do nothing," our Lord had said. We cannot know our failings in their true light, and rid ourselves of them, without help from God. Getting rid of inordinate habits is much like casting out the devil, and this, as the apostles found out on a certain occasion, is no child's play. The grace we ask is twofold: to cure the blindness of mind which refuses to recognize sin, and to rouse the sluggish will to form strong resolutions.

Our problem now is how to secure this divine assistance. We must pray for it. We may, perhaps, begin with a prayer to Mary Immaculate, whose mind was flooded with light, and whose will was untouched even by the faintest weakness. We shall, of course, recall the Church's official prayers for light and strength, the vigorous *Veni Sancte Spiritus* and the collect for the Sunday of Pentecost. The Sequence, in particular, will yield a number of powerful pleas for help, especially the two stanzas in which each verse begins with an urgent imperative: "Wash, water,

heal; bend, warm, direct"—all expressions that stress the difficulty the soul experiences in the process of driving out sin.

But here, as elsewhere in this examination of conscience, I would recommend that we go through this point with an eye to the future. We may ask the grace to know and expel sin, not only here and now for the purposes of this examen, but also to secure help for the future, as, for example, by asking the twofold grace for our next weekly confession. This practice, faithfully adhered to, will raise our estimation of the Sacrament of Penance, and, no doubt, make its reception more profitable. Again, there is but one step in thought from the weekly confession to that last of all confessions which we hope to make when we arrive on the threshold of eternity. Our death is in the hands of a merciful God: it may be sudden, if He so decides, but we pray that it may not be unprovided. This long-range preparation for it will win us special light and special strength in the moment when we shall welcome them most. It is then that we shall wish to know *all* our "innumerable sins and offences and negligences" and to repent of them so *genuinely* that our entrance into "the Holy of Holies" may, if possible, be instantaneous. And here, too, we may be apostolic in our prayer and ask the twofold grace for the thousands that shall die this day. Are they prepared? Or are they unprepared? We shudder to think of it. Many live so lightheartedly as hardly ever to think of God. We can assist them in the hour of their greatest need.

I repeat what I said in the first point: what is wanted is not a multiplicity of prayers, the depths of which we do not sound, but rather one or two sincere aspirations that set our hearts aflame.

We are now ready for the third point, the scrutiny. Here we are: defendant, prosecutor, witness, judge, all in



one. "The third point," says St. Ignatius, "will be to ask account of our soul from the time at which we rose to the present examen, hour by hour, or period by period, and first as to thoughts, then as to words, and finally as to acts." Thoughts, words and deeds are the material on which to base the final verdict.

Of the five points this is the only one into which prayer as such does not enter. It is a cold-blooded examination conducted by the understanding, illumined, of course, by the light of the Holy Spirit for which we prayed in the second point. Among the "thoughts" we include motives, those hidden springs of action which make an individual's seemingly plain, monotonous life so colorful in the sight of God. Further detail is unnecessary. We know the ten commandments, we know the precepts of the Church, we know the rules of our order. We recall the persons with whom we were dealing earlier in the day, and the work or task we were expected to perform. That is all.

The minutes allowed for the examination are brief, and we must proceed to its most important part. "The fourth point," says St. Ignatius, "will be to ask pardon of God our Lord for the faults committed." Contrition is sorrow for sin, and sorrow has a sting in it. St. Ignatius has two significant words for it, "shame" and "confusion." But while the realization of the numerous lapses in the past (I say "the past" designedly, for we may wish to include in every act of contrition the sins committed from the dawn of reason onward) is painful to a soul that loves God, yet sorrow for them must not be depressing. True Christian contrition is hopeful, and hope is not unmingled with joy. Even the Church on Holy Saturday, after the night of sin has passed away and the true Light of the world has risen, cries out: "*O felix culpa!*" Adam's fault was a "happy" one in the sense that it has brought us "a Redeemer so



good, so great." So in our own case; our sorrow for sin, if genuine, will be a source of blessings. Every sin of the past will be a stimulus to greater fervor in the service of God. This, surely, is reason enough, even if there were no others, to make our contrition as perfect as we can. The devil, who rejoiced in our faults, is thus utterly routed.

In going through this fourth point, we should remember that there is a distinction between perfect and imperfect contrition, the former based on the love of God, the latter on supernatural, though inferior, motives. Furthermore, every sin presents many aspects. It is "heinous," says St. Ignatius, "even if it were not forbidden." It forms the strongest possible contrast to the infinite holiness of God. It is also an offence against the divine lawgiver who forbids sin as an infringement of His commandments. It is ingratitude toward our divine Benefactor, whose blessings we recalled in the first point. To deplore our faults more efficaciously, we may also remember that, in committing them, we seemed to make so little of all that Christ our Lord did and suffered for us. Thoughts like these will furnish numerous motives for making a heartfelt act of contrition.

As to the words in which to clothe our act of contrition, the Church supplies us with numerous well-tried patterns. There is, first of all, the act of contrition so familiar to us from childhood. Then, again, we may find something suited to our state of mind in the psalm called the *Miserere*. But here, again, I would suggest that we closely adhere to the Ordinary of the Mass. It is not without significance that the priest at the foot of the altar, in preparing for the Holy Sacrifice, spends so great an amount of time in asking God's pardon. The *Confiteor* invites Heaven to witness our contrition, and thereby increases our sense of shame. Again, have we ever tried to utilize the urgent appeals for divine mercy in the versicles and responses directly follow-

ing the *Confiteor*? "May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive our sins, and bring us to eternal life. May the Almighty and Merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins. *Turn to us, O Lord, and give us life: and Thy people shall rejoice in Thee.*" (Note by the way, how the Church couples "joy" with the act of contrition. Sin is not forgiven except through the infusion or an increase of "life," that is, sanctifying grace.) Ascending the altar steps, the priest says the beautiful *Aufer a nobis*: "Take away from us our sins, we beg, O Lord, that by Thy grace we may enter the Holy of Holies with minds that have been purified." In the *Oramus te* he calls upon the saints for their intercession: "We implore Thee, O Lord, by the merits of Thy saints whose relics are upon our altars, graciously to forgive all our sins." The need of contrition for sin is so vividly present to the mind of the Church that expressions of it appear again in later parts of the Mass, as, for example, at the offering of the bread, when the priest asks pardon "for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences." Again, a little later: "In humble frame of mind and with a crushed heart we beg to be received by Thee, O Lord." The last reference to sin in the Mass occurs in the *Placeat*, the very last prayer in the Mass. These prayers are all apt expressions of contrition that we may use in the examination of conscience.

Fr. Meschler says: "Our sorrow for sin should be as perfect and sincere as we can make it." A further warning by the same writer is also in place here: "It is of importance to spend most of the time (that is, during the examen) on the act of contrition and on the constructive part of the exercise. To remove the dust from a piece of furniture we do not pick up particle after particle. One good sweep of the duster will do the work in a moment. The effect of deep-felt sorrow for sin and a firm purpose of amendment

is much the same."

One more remark before we pass on. As Christ our Lord took upon Himself the whole burden of the world's load of sin, and made Himself a *peccatum*, that is, a sin, a representative of the whole sinful race, so we may, in imitation of Christ, take the world's sins upon ourselves and include, in our act of contrition, a will to make reparation for the sins of all men.

In the general examination of conscience, by the way, St. Ignatius says nothing about corporal penances or acts of mortification which one may undertake as a natural and spontaneous fruit of contrition. But we know from his life that he was one of the world's great penitents; and besides, from occasional remarks in the Spiritual Exercises, it is clear that he approves of this practice.

There is one more point to consider, the constructive part of the examination of conscience. After tearing down the whole or part of a building, it is necessary to build up again. "The fifth point," says St. Ignatius, "is to propose amendment with God's grace." Again we notice the saint's awareness of the fact that divine grace plays an indispensable part in the work of sanctification. "The resolution," says Fr. Meschler, "should be firm and strong. We should foresee the ordinary occasions of our faults and take precaution against them."

Here, as elsewhere in this examination, the Missal is a trustworthy guide. I would call attention to two prayers in the Canon of the Mass which seem to me well suited to ask the help of God in laying a solid foundation for the future. There is first the *Supplices te rogamus*, in which we pray that our sacrifice (which in our own case should mean all the efforts we wish to make to reform our lives) may be presented, by the hands of the Angel, to God's majesty "in order that we may be filled *more and*

more with every celestial grace and benediction." Then I suggest the *Libera nos*, which comes directly after the *Pater noster* and ends in this consoling prayer: "Graciously shed peace upon *our days*, in order that, aided by the wealth of Thy mercy, we may *ever* be free from sin and secure from *every* disturbance." Here the outlook is upon the rest of our days which we hope to spend in this vale of tears. "Graciously shed *peace upon our days!*"

Once more I wish to point out that these prayers of the Church are phrased in the plural number, so that, in saying them, we actually include the interests of our fellow men. However good a prayer may be, it is still better for an additional touch of Christian charity, and since charity begins at home, we are praying for our fellow religious, those, in particular, who live in the same community with us. With them our lot is cast by the arrangement of our superiors, and it is essential that we live in harmony and give edification. When defects are noticed, human nature is prone to criticize, to judge rashly, to harm more than to help. All such unlovely traits of character may be effectively stifled by a hearty prayer for the supposed offender. Nor would the examination of conscience be quite complete if we did not resolve to mend such ways of our own as we know from experience to be irritating to those with whom we live.

St. Ignatius wants us to close the examination with an Our Father. After all, the Lord's Prayer contains everything we need for a devout life.

I must conclude. The daily examination of conscience is a recognized practice in religious institutions. It is of vital importance for the spiritual well-being of the entire community, and should, therefore, be made, to borrow a phrase from St. Ignatius, "with all diligence in the Lord." Unless our heart is in it, it becomes a matter of routine which leaves us just where we were before we began.

An examination well made prepares the soul for the various indulgences, plenary or partial, which one may wish to gain that particular day.

It is essential to St. Ignatius's method to go through all the five points as often as the examen is made. But it would be contrary to his mind to give the same amount of time, say, three minutes, to each of the points. On Easterday, for example, it would seem natural to draw out the time for the giving of thanks, while on Good Friday the soul is, perhaps, more attuned to sorrow for sin. St. Ignatius believed in methods, but had no use for soulless rigidity in the use of them.

The pattern here set forth links the examination with the Roman Missal and thus centers our attention around the one great act of worship, the Mass. There are, of course, other ways, of conducting this inquiry. I once listened to a talk in which the instructor linked St. Ignatius's five points with the Five Wounds of our Blessed Savior. The saints are ingenious in devising methods of prayer that suit their personal preferences and, at the same time, yield notable results.

A decided advantage of the method here proposed is, I think, that it lays stress on actual prayer. The complaint has been made that "some religious give more time, in their devotions, to the play of the intellect than they give to the will." After all, prayer is the daily bread of a religious. I shall close, therefore, with the admonition of St. Paul: "Be assiduous in prayer."

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#### Holy Hour for Conversions

Father Albert A. Murray, C.S.P., has made a simple, striking arrangement of prayers for use during a *Holy Hour for Conversions*. The Paulist Fathers will supply the booklets, free of charge, to religious communities that wish to establish this apostolic devotion. Write to: The Paulist Fathers, 911 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 5, Illinois.

## Decisions of the Holy See

**July 21, 1944:** The Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office published a decree in which it declared that the *system of mitigated millenarianism* cannot be taught safely. His Holiness, Pius XII, approved and confirmed this answer and ordered it to be published.

In its decree the Holy Office defines mitigated millenarianism as that system "which teaches that Christ the Lord will come before the final judgment, either before or after the resurrection of many of the just, for the purpose of reigning visibly here upon this earth."

**May 20, 1944:** In an audience granted to the Cardinal Major Penitentiary, His Holiness, Pius XII, in reply to the request of many priests, granted to those who, in the adversities of this life lift up a trusting heart to God and with pious mind and contrite heart recite the words: "Thy will be done," the following indulgences: (1) 50 days each time; (2) a plenary indulgence to be gained under the usual conditions, after having devoutly recited the aspiration every day for a month. Promulgated in a decree of the Sacred Penitentiary, dated July 10, 1944.

**January 24, 1944:** In an audience granted to the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, His Holiness, Pius XII, approved with his apostolic authority, the erection and constitution of a *special commission* within the said Sacred Congregation to assist it in fulfilling the duties entrusted to it by canon 251. This new commission, to be made up of learned and experienced men, will handle all questions and matters in any way pertaining to the religious and clerical training of aspirants, novices, and junior members of every religious institute, and of societies living in common without vows. It will also handle questions pertaining to their literary, scientific and practical training.

The following will be especially entrusted to the Commission:

- (a) to define and outline the cardinal principles and peculiar characteristics which should guide the education and training of religious;
- (b) to keep a watchful eye on the ordinations of superiors and chapters regarding matters pertaining to education and training, as well as to inspect and examine carefully the reports furnished on these subjects by superiors and apostolic visitors.

## Should We Baptize Dying Adults?

Gerald Kelly, S.J.

**"F**ATHER, why do priests differ so much on the question of baptizing unconscious dying people?"

The speaker was a zealous nurse. I suspected what she meant, but I preferred to reply the Irish way:

"Just what do you mean, 'differ so much'?"

"Well, during my training the priest who taught us religion advised us always to give conditional baptism to unconscious dying people, unless we were sure they were already baptized. But our hospital chaplain insists that it is wrong to baptize people unless they have given some kind of sign that they want to be baptized. This is a pretty serious matter, it seems to me. We nurses frequently have to attend patients who were brought into the hospital unconscious and who die without regaining consciousness. Sometimes we don't know anything about their religious beliefs. It might be that they want baptism and that they need it, but they can't express themselves. Are we to stand by and let them lose their souls when we might do the one thing necessary to save them?"

That nurse rather completely outlined a difficulty not infrequently encountered by those who care for the sick. Priests differ on a point of seemingly supreme importance. Some say, "Baptize"; and some say, "Don't dare baptize"; and the result is confusion, even distress, on the part of the Sisters, Brothers, and nurses.

In slightly varying form, this question has been often presented to me. I have given answers and explanations to the individuals presenting the question; but it has occurred



to me that, since a large number of our readers are engaged in caring for the sick, it might be well to give them the background for this diversity of opinion among priests regarding the baptism of unconscious dying people.

The question, of course, concerns dying adults. No chaplain, I know, would tell a nurse that she should never baptize an unbaptized dying baby. Dying infants who are not certainly baptized, are always to be baptized unless their baptism would bring harm to the Church—something which is quite improbable. But the question of baptizing dying adults has certain complications, both theoretically and practically; and a difference of opinion regarding some cases is almost inevitable.

The Church law concerning the baptism of adults is contained in canon 752. The three parts of this canon cover three distinct cases: (1) The baptism of adults who are not in danger of death; (2) the baptism of adults who are in danger of death, but conscious; and (3) the baptism of adults who are in danger of death and already unconscious. Since our present discussion concerns the baptism of the dying, the first part of the canon is not strictly pertinent. However, for the sake of completeness and clarity, I believe it advisable to give a brief commentary on the entire canon.

### *No Danger of Death*

The first part of canon 752 prescribes that adults who are not in danger of death are not to be baptized unless they expressly desire it. Moreover, before they are baptized they are to be given complete catechetical instructions and are to be warned to make an act of contrition for their sins.

Such are the regulations for what we may term the ordinary cases: that is, the preparation and baptism of converts who are not in danger of death. The reason for the



first prescription is obvious. Everyone who has reached the age of reason must decide for himself whether he wishes to receive baptism; God does not force his gifts on anyone. Hence, in the case of all but infants, a requisite for valid baptism is the *willingness* of the subject. And of course, the minister of the sacrament should know of this willingness before he baptizes.

The need of complete instruction in this case is also evident. The convert is being prepared to lead a Catholic life, and one can hardly lead such a life if he knows only the few truths of Faith that are necessary for salvation. Finally, the act of contrition is necessary because even baptism cannot wipe away his personal sins unless he repents of them.

We need not delay further on this part of the canon. A priest would be the one to confer baptism in these ordinary cases, and he would know the requisites of law and should see that they are fulfilled. I might add, however, for the benefit of those religious who may be called on occasionally to instruct converts, that it is very important to teach them how to go to confession. The knowledge will be an immense help to them after their conversion.

### *Dying, but Conscious*

The second part of the canon deals with the case of a person who is in danger of death, but still conscious and in possession of his faculties. In this case there is no change with regard to the requisite intention and act of contrition. The person is not to be baptized unless he wishes it; and, if he is baptized, he is to be cautioned to make an act of contrition for his sins.

With regard to the instruction, there must be some modification. The complete instruction of a convert takes several weeks, or even several months, depending on the

convert's capacity and on the frequency and duration of the instructions. Evidently such complete instruction is impossible when death is imminent. The canon recognizes this and indicates the minimum essentials of instruction to be given in these urgent cases: namely a sufficient explanation of the principal truths of the Catholic Faith so that the sick person can give some assent to these truths and profess his willingness to live up to the obligations imposed by the Christian religion (in case he should recover).

The principal truths of our Faith, belief in which is necessary for salvation, are four: the existence of one God, the fact that God rewards the good and punishes the wicked, the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and the mystery of the Incarnation. These truths are aptly expressed in simple acts of faith by Monsignor Markham in the prayers he has composed for the assistance of dying non-Catholics. "I believe in one God. I believe that God rewards the good and punishes the wicked. I believe that in God there are three divine Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. I believe that God the Son became Man, without ceasing to be God. I believe that He is my Lord and My Saviour, the Redeemer of the human race, that He died on the Cross for the salvation of all men, that He died also for me."

Such is one brief statement of the four truths that everyone must believe in order to be certain of saving his soul. If at all possible, something should be said about each of the truths so that the dying person can make his act of faith in all of them. This can generally be done in a few minutes; hence there is usually no great difficulty in at least outlining the truths. In the rare cases in which all four truths cannot be mentioned, we should at least help the patient make an act of faith in the first two truths: namely, in the existence of one God and in the fact that God rewards the

good and punishes the wicked. It is probable, though by no means certain, that faith in these two truths is sufficient for salvation; and that probability can be acted upon when further instruction is impossible.

In assisting dying non-Catholics we should not place too much confidence in the mere words, "I believe." In Catholic doctrine the words "faith" and "believe" have technical meanings. When we say we believe, we mean we accept a truth, not because we see it or understand it, but because God revealed it. In other words, we take God's word for it. It is important for us to bear this in mind and to impress this point on the dying non-Catholic, because many of them have very vague notions of "faith" and "belief." Monsignor Markham's card, after giving the acts of faith cited above, adds this brief prayer: "I believe, on God's authority, everything that He has taught and revealed." If a nurse is using this card, these words would give the opportunity for a brief explanation of the true meaning of faith.

Father William Bowdern, S.J., in his pamphlet, *The Catholic Nurse and the Dying*, suggests that the nurse explain the meaning of faith and the truths necessary to be believed in the following simple manner:

"You believe that there is a very good and loving God, don't you? You know that He could not tell a lie or teach us anything wrong. He told us some things about Himself, and because He only tells the truth, you and I believe what He has told us. We take His word for it, don't we? He told us that there is only one God and three divine persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And He said that the Son came down on earth and took on Himself our human nature, and then died on the cross to save us, because He loved us so much. And He told us that He wants us all to be happy with Him forever in heaven when we die.

And He told us that the only ones who will not be with Him in heaven are those who insist on going to hell where they will suffer and never see Him. We believe these things because God told us, don't we?"

The foregoing are ways of helping the dying person make the necessary acts of faith. Every nurse ought to have some simple, clearly-planned way of doing this. Having helped the patient make the acts of faith, she should then help him to make the other prayers, particularly the act of contrition. Monsignor Markham's card is also a great aid to this, as it contains, besides the acts of faith, also brief acts of hope, charity, and contrition.

What we have said thus far pertains to the preparation of a dying person for baptism. This is equivalent to saying that we are preparing him for admission into the Catholic Church; hence the canon cautions us to have the patient express a willingness to observe the precepts of the Christian religion. This does not mean that we have to recount all these precepts in detail; but when we are dealing with a conscious person and there is time we should at least be sure that he wants to keep the Commandments of God and live up to the obligations that the Church imposes on him. If he expresses this willingness, he is to be baptized without delay. The canon supposes that the baptism will be conferred while the recipient is still conscious, if this is possible. However, should he lose consciousness before receiving the sacrament, but after having requested it, it should be administered unconditionally.

### *Dying, but Unconscious*

The third part of Canon 752 gives us some practical rules about dying adults who are either wholly or partially unconscious. Such persons are to be baptized conditionally if, before becoming unconscious, they gave some probable

sign that they wanted baptism, or if, in their present state (when partially unconscious) they give a probable indication that they wish to be baptized. The baptism is administered conditionally—the condition being: "If you wish to be baptized." Later, if the subject recovers and manifests a clear desire to be baptized, he is to be re-baptized conditionally ("if you are not baptized"), because it is not certain that the first conditional baptism is valid.

Such are the prescriptions of the canon. In themselves, these prescriptions are clear and admit of no controversy. However, with regard to one point there is evidently room for differences of opinion. I refer to the interpretation of the words, "a probable sign that he wishes to be baptized." Theologians can and do dispute over what constitutes a wish to be baptized, and also over what constitutes a manifestation of such a wish. Because of this possibility of differences of opinion, it may be well for us to consider some of the cases likely to arise.

Mr. X belongs to no particular religion; but his wife is a Catholic and his children are Catholics. He has never said openly that he intended to join the Catholic Church, but he has manifested such general good will that those who know him feel rather confident that he had "leanings" in that direction. Cases like this are not infrequent. One who is assisting at X's deathbed has good reason to conclude: "It is probable that this man intended to join the Catholic Church before his death." Evidently, an intention to join the Catholic Church includes an intention to receive baptism; hence we have here a probable sign of the will to be baptized. I doubt if any one would question the fact that such a person should be given conditional baptism, if he were unconscious and dying.

Mr. Y presents a somewhat different case. He has never manifested that he wanted to be a Catholic, but he has

shown a disposition to be a "Christian," that is, to belong to one of the sects that profess Christianity. In other words he has given some indication that he wants to belong to "Christ's religion," whatever that is. Actually, of course, there is only one true Church of Christ. A person may be mistaken as to which is the true one; but, if he does want to belong to Christ's Church, he also wants baptism, because our Lord made baptism the sacrament of entry into His Church. Hence, anyone who has given an indication that he wants to be a Christian should be conditionally baptized when he is unconscious and dying, unless it is certain that he is already validly baptized.

Mr. Z presents a still different and more difficult case. He belongs to no Christian body; but he has been a "good man," in the sense that he wanted to do the right thing, or at least he has manifested that he was sorry for all his sins and that he wanted to do what was necessary to save his soul. This, of course, is a much more general disposition than that of X or Y. And the question arises: can such a disposition, for example, sorrow for sins and desire to do what is necessary for salvation, be construed as a wish to receive baptism, or is something more definite demanded? Theologians do not agree in their answer to the question. Many hold that this disposition is entirely too general; others consider that it implicitly includes the wish to receive baptism, because baptism is one of the ordinary means of salvation instituted by God.

Because of the controversy just mentioned, we cannot say with certainty that a man who has indicated that he wants to do everything necessary to save his soul has the requisite intention for baptism. But we can say, at least because of the authorities behind the opinion, that it is probable that such a person wishes to be baptized; hence we are justified in conferring conditional baptism when the

man is in danger of death and unconscious.

The foregoing brief comments exhaust the provisions of canon 752. The canon says nothing directly about the case proposed by the nurse at the beginning of this article: namely, about the unconscious person about whom we know nothing.

From the silence of the Code, and from the severe tenor of certain decisions of the Holy See that are used as the foundation for canon 752, many theologians argue that the Church *forbids* the baptism, even conditional, of a dying unconscious person *unless* he has given some positive sign that he wishes to be baptized. In other words, according to these theologians, canon 752 tells us not merely everything that we should do, but also everything that we *may* do.

Some authors convey the impression that this severe opinion is the only tenable opinion in the matter. Very likely the reason why the chaplain referred to by the nurse at the beginning of this article insisted that unknown, unconscious dying persons may not be baptized, even conditionally, is that he had not heard of another tenable opinion.

Yet there *is* another opinion, an opinion held as practically probable by such theologians as Bucceroni, Cappello, Davis, Genicot, Iorio, Lehmkuhl, Piscetta, Sabetti, Vermeersch, and Wouters. I realize, of course, that a list of names like this may be "so much Greek" to nurses and hospital Sisters and Brothers; yet to the priest who is conversant with books of Moral Theology the list should be highly significant. Some, if not all, of these men are certainly among the outstanding moralists of the present century. We may safely say that the opinion they sponsor as probable in the present matter may be followed unless some further decision of the Holy See makes it clear that the opinion is to be rejected.



In the opinion of the authors just cited—an opinion often referred to as the “lenient” opinion—we are justified in conferring conditional baptism on the unknown and unconscious dying adult. The authors admit that their opinion seems less in conformity with the decrees of the Holy See than the severe opinion; but they deny that these decrees make the other side certain.

To sum up the material treated in this article. In ordinary cases of conversion, when there is no urgent necessity for baptism, the sacrament is not to be conferred unless the subject expressly asks for it and until he is prepared for the sacrament by complete catechetical instruction. And, in order that the sacrament be certainly fruitful, he is to be warned to repent of his sins.

In urgent cases, in which even those who are not priests may confer the sacrament, it suffices to help the dying person make the essential act of faith and a sincere act of contrition. The supposition here, of course, is that the subject wishes to be baptized and is willing to live up to the precepts of God and the Church, should he recover.

As for unconscious persons, we have treated three distinct cases. First, those who certainly wanted baptism before lapsing into unconsciousness are to be baptized unconditionally. Secondly, those who gave some probable sign that they wished to be baptized are to be baptized conditionally. And finally—in the case proposed by the nurse—if nothing is known about the person, the nurse is justified in conferring conditional baptism if she wishes to do so; but because of the strong opinion against it, she is not strictly obliged to do so. As Father Sabetti would say: “If she does nothing, I do not reprimand her; but if she confers conditional baptism, I praise her.” In other words, the nurse may make her own the opinion of Father Vermeersch, who, after having examined all the arguments of



the severe side, concluded that: "If scandal is avoided, one may confer conditional baptism on any unconscious, dying adult who is not known to be already baptized." As for myself, I believe that this same Father Vermeersch expressed what seems to be a Catholic instinct when he said: "I could not resign myself to permit a single soul to be lost that might have been saved by my ministrations."

Father Vermeersch's words could well be taken as an ideal by all who minister to the dying. The words are applicable, not merely to the case of giving conditional baptism to unknown, unconscious persons, but also and even especially to the preparation of conscious patients for death. After all, the baptism of unknown and unconscious persons is of very dubious efficacy, as even the staunchest defenders of the practice will admit. It is the seizing of a last plank of hope, the use of a last desperate remedy. But when a patient is conscious, no matter what his religion, the nurse accomplishes results that are definitely fruitful, even to a high degree, by encouraging him to devout acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. In the case of non-Catholics, in particular, the nurse's spiritual assistance may be badly needed, because very often they have no one to help them prepare for their meeting with our Lord. For this reason, I again recommend the splendid work of the Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For further information about the Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics, see REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, I, p. 338; or write for sample brochure and prayer cards to one of the following addresses: (a) Rt. Rev. R. J. Markham, S.T.D., Comptom Road, Hartwell, Cincinnati 15, Ohio. (b) Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis, St. Clare Convent, Hartwell, Cincinnati 15, Ohio. (c) Sister M. Carmelita, R.S.M., Convent of Mercy, 1409 Freeman Avenue, Cincinnati 14, Ohio.

# Questions and Answers

—1—

Our constitutions prescribe a half hour of private spiritual reading. Is that requisite fulfilled when we have reading in common and one person delegated to do so reads for the duration of half an hour?

Yes, the common performance of an act will always satisfy the obligation of the constitutions requiring the private performance of such an act. Thus on special occasions, such as feast days, or on the day of monthly recollection, it may be desirable to have some special reading appropriate for the feast or monthly recollection. Since such reading may not be available for all because of the lack of books, the reading held in common would satisfy the obligation of private spiritual reading.

The question might be raised whether the superior could oblige the Sisters to have reading *in common* when the Constitutions require *private* reading. We think that this might be done occasionally, as indicated above, but not habitually. If the superior desired to have some particular book read for the community because of its special spiritual value, she might invite the Sisters to attend the common reading of that book over a period of time, but she could not strictly oblige them to be present at the common reading.

—2—

In some communities the Sisters with temporary vows are referred to as "professed novices." Does this imply that they may be classed with and mingle with the novices rather than with the perpetually professed Sisters?

The term "professed novices" is a misnomer. If they are professed they are not novices, and if they are novices they are not professed religious. The custom of having the religious professed of temporary vows remain in a class by themselves, and of giving them special additional training in the spiritual life, is most praiseworthy, though not required by Canon Law. A better name for them is that of "junior professed" whereby they are distinguished from the "senior professed," that is, those religious who have taken their perpetual vows.

The Code of Canon Law is meticulous in its use of the terms

"novice" and "professed religious," and this use should be retained in order to avoid many misunderstandings.

The answer to our question is given in canon 564, § 1 which tells us that "the novitiate shall be, as far as possible, separated from that part of the house inhabited by the professed religious, so that, without a special cause and the permission of the superior or of the master, the novices may not have communication with the professed religious, nor these latter with the novices." The canon makes no distinction between religious who have taken temporary vows, and those who have made profession of perpetual vows, as it frequently does in other cases. Hence we can only conclude that the professed of temporary vows are included in the prohibition.

—3—

What is the meaning of the statement in a recent issue of the *Review* (III, 371) that the Epistle to the Hebrews may be the work of another writer than Paul, at least in part?

It means that the *literary* form of the Epistle may be the work of someone other than Paul. Catholic critics are permitted to hold this view, with deference, of course, to any further decision of the Church. For further explanation confer the introduction to the Westminster Version of the Epistle to the Hebrews, or see the Commentary on the New Testament prepared by the (American) Catholic Biblical Association.

—4—

Our constitutions prescribe our making the Stations of the Cross in common every Friday. Do we gain any indulgences if the congregation, which consists of some thirty Sisters, remains in the pews and the superior alone proceeds from station to station?

Although this question was answered in Volume I, page 424 of *REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS*, we shall give here the substance of that answer for the benefit of those who may not have that volume. On February 27, 1901, the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences granted to the Marist Brothers the favor whereby they could gain the indulgences of the Way of the Cross if only one person (for example, a Brother of the community) made the round of the stations, the rest of the community remaining in their places. The condition laid down in this grant was that there was a lack of space in the community

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

chapel for all the religious to move from station to station. On May 7, 1902, this same privilege was extended to the chapels of all religious women, under the same conditions.

#### —5—

Is it being "more catholic than the Church" to keep the Lenten fast, if the bishop has dispensed from the obligation of fasting "for the duration"?

The dispensation takes away the *obligation* imposed by the general law of the Church; and even those who are able to fast and who would normally be obliged to do so are exempted. The dispensation does not affect obligations imposed on religious by their rule, and it does not change the fact that fasting is a good penance when practiced according to the norms of prudence. Fasting, even "during the duration," is very much in tune with the spirit of the Church. The Lenten liturgy is full of references to fasting.

#### —6—

Would it be incorrect to have flowers on the altar during the Benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament which occur from Passion Sunday to Easter?

The prescriptions of the rubrics forbidding the placing of flowers on the altar during penitential seasons, apply only when the Mass or office of the season is said. Even then flowers are allowed on the altar by way of exception on the occasion of the First Communion of children, and in honor of St. Joseph during the month of March (S.R.C., d. 3448 ad XI). Hence it seems reasonable to allow them during the Benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament which occur during Passiontide.

#### —7—

Could you suggest, through the pages of the *Review*, a book of meditations suitable for boys in a minor seminary?

We regret our inability to suggest such a book of meditations, and request our readers who have knowledge of such a book or books to communicate it to us so that we may publish it in this column.

## Book Reviews

**DO I REALLY BELIEVE?** Meditations on the Apostles' Creed. By the Reverend Henri Lebon, S.M. Translated from the French by the Reverend Peter Resch, S.M. The Abbey Press, St. Meinrad, Ind. \$2.25.

This book of meditations should receive an enthusiastic welcome, especially from religious. It consists of a series of seventy-four meditations based entirely on the articles of the Apostles' Creed.

The theme, of course, is not new; many meditations have been based on the Creed. But this series is possessed of a unique spirit. It is the spirit of the Founder of the Society of Mary, the venerable Father Chaminade. Father Lebon has captured this spirit and edited it.

Father Chaminade, in his work of catechising and training young religious, found himself constantly stressing faith as the bed-rock of all Christian perfection. Indeed he was convinced that defection from religious vocation could be traced to a lack of lively faith. So he found it exceedingly profitable to base many meditations on the Apostles' Creed.

The book follows faithfully the traditional form of preludes, division of matter for thought, followed by examen, affections, and resolutions. However, into that form the author succeeds in weaving a wealth of apt illustrations from personal experience. The Holy Fathers speak too from every page. And there are constant quotations from both the Old and New Testaments.

—W. J. O'SHAUGHNESSY, S.J.

**LENT: A Liturgical Commentary on the Lessons and Gospels.** By the Reverend Conrad Pepler, O.P. Pp. x + 406. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1944. \$4.00.

This book of very serious Lenten reflections has an advantage for religious communities in that the daily portion offered is of greater length, closer to fifteen minutes, than the sparse outline contained in most manuals. A further merit is that its reflections on penance and the Passion are brought clearly into line with the day's Holy Sacrifice.

Undoubtedly every religious, as the sombre impressiveness of Lent looms on his prayer horizon each year, has felt a thirst of soul

for a richer understanding of the Lenten liturgy. How fine it would be if those reflections on sorrow for sin and union with the suffering Christ, which common consent dictates as the atmosphere of the Forty Days, might unfold naturally out of the venerable solemnity of each day's Mass, obviating that unwanted disunity in the morning's stint of prayer! Hence the value of Father Pepler's achievement.

It would be no small injustice to this meditation book to judge it too narrowly in the light of its subtitle, "A Liturgical Commentary." The author *uses* the liturgical text. He wrestles earnestly with it to make it subserve the orderly plan of reflections he has proposed to himself as likely to be most profitable to the reader; whereas the task of a commentator is to *follow* his text, adapt himself to it, make all his explanations serve it faithfully. Moreover, Father Pepler is distinctly patristic, rather than modern or scientific, in his attitude toward both Scripture and the liturgy. The Jacob incident, like the whole of Scripture, "is not intended to signify itself, for that is some material fact, but a hidden truth which is to be sought under the symbolism" (p. 126). The author's Augustinian emphasis on the "mystical" accommodation of Scripture, though not precisely what we look for in a modern "commentary," is satisfactorily handled for purposes of devout meditation.

—R. G. NORTH, S.J.

**A REALISTIC PHILOSOPHY.** By K. F. Reinhardt, Ph.D. Pp. xii + 268. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1944. \$2.75.

In this "Science and Culture" book, Dr. K. F. Reinhardt of Stanford University presents a brief account of Scholastic philosophy, and shows how it works into political and economic philosophy. Philosophers should read this book to see how their thought furnishes principles of action most appropriate to reestablish peace and justice. Those who are working for international order and social justice should read it for its clear and relatively simple presentation of the principles through which alone these ends can be achieved.

Dr. Reinhardt is well qualified to handle the interrelations between these fields. He has a doctorate in philosophy to give him a solid background in this field; his practical experience as an active member of the German Centrist party, as editor and publisher,

qualifies him to speak on politics and economics.

Scholastic thought, as it appears in this necessarily brief compass, is shown to be realistic and logical. The author's main effort in the earlier section of the book is to show the realism of the "perennial philosophy"; that it is, in fact, the only true realism, since it alone deals with all reality.

Philosophy is of course never light reading. Dr. Reinhardt does well in avoiding technical terminology and Latinism. His vigorous and concrete style carries the educated reader along through pages of closely packed reasoning. Those who are interested in the problems which are treated here, but who have felt themselves excluded from the technical literature on the subjects through lack of formal training in them, will profitably and gladly read this eminently worth-while book.

The book is implemented with a glossary of technical terms and bibliography; there is an index.—G. P. KLUBERTANZ, S.J.

**SPEAKING OF HOW TO PRAY.** By Mary Perkins. Pp. xii + 276. Sheed and Ward, New York, 1944. \$2.75.

Saint Teresa, who loved intelligent persons, would have loved Mary Perkins, for Mary Perkins is a very intelligent person. More than that, she is able to explain what she understands in clear and non-technical language. She has written a very sound and valuable book, which should enable any reader to comprehend better than he did before the meaning of life and the way to live.

The title is not very revealing. The book is much more than a discussion of how to pray. It sets forth God's blue print for the universe and for each man, and points out the one method of carrying out the divine idea.

Part I, about a fourth of the book, is an amazingly fine synthesis of theology, given the brief compass allotted to it. God's purpose in creating the world, original sin, the Incarnation, the redemption, and the Church are discussed and related in such a way that the whole organism of Christian revelation stands forth clearly.

The remaining chapters, which make up Part II, describe the life each Christian is called to live in the Church so as to achieve the closest possible union with Christ, and through Christ with God, our ultimate end. This section of the work is extremely practical; it shows us how to utilize the means of union which Christ offers us in the Church, especially the Mass, the sacraments, the divine office,

and prayer, both vocal and mental. The author fully appreciates the wealth of Catholic liturgy, and is in complete sympathy with the objectives of the liturgical movement that has given a renewed impetus to Catholic life in recent decades. Anyone who follows the plan here attractively presented is on the road to sanctity. For this is the Church's own plan, and the life outlined is the life of the Church.

The book should not be read rapidly. Otherwise a certain unrelieved monotony in the style will pall. A chapter each day, read slowly and reflectively, would be ideal. An excessive fondness for capitalization of words which need not, by any rules or usage, begin with capital letters, and the device of splitting words into component elements, such as "will-full," "super-natural," "norm-al," and a host of others, may serve to attract the attention of some readers, but will probably irritate others.—C. VOLLERT, S.J.

**WITH THE HELP OF THY GRACE.** By the Reverend John V. Matthews, S.J., S.T.D., Mag. Agg. (Pont. Greg. Univ.). Pp. 114. The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Maryland, 1944. \$1.50.

This book is, in substance, the treatise on Actual Grace taught in seminaries. As such it will be of interest to the student of theology, for laymen and for religious. It takes up in turn the meaning of Grace, its source, a few fundamental divisions, a definition of Actual Grace, its supernatural character, its nature, necessity and distribution, Grace and freedom of the will. To these questions are added such distinctive chapters as: "Can Actual Grace be seen or touched?" "When may Actual Grace be expected?" "How great a gift is Actual Grace?"

Certain sections of the formal treatise on Actual Grace are omitted. For example, no mention is made of the highly controverted subject of the reconciliation of Actual Grace with the freedom of man's will. Discussions of this nature are not considered pertinent to the purpose of the book.

The topic of each chapter is proposed in the form of a question. The body of the chapters proceeds in the catechetical method of question and answer. To these are appended Scripture quotations in support of the truth proposed. But the book is more than a catechism, as some of the questions run through two pages or more. Chapter questions serve as a striking way of approach to a truth put in thesis form in theological manuals. They remind one of the very



effective yet simple problem method of St. Thomas.

The primary purpose of this book is to convey to the reader a fuller knowledge of Actual Grace. This is as it ought to be, for appreciation and solid devotion presuppose understanding. Too little has been said and written in explanation of Actual Grace. Too much of the little said has left minds without a grasp of basic ideas. To accomplish his aim the author bends every effort. His insistence throughout is on clarity and simplicity, even to the deliberate sacrifice of literary style.

But the book is not all purely informational. A certain proportion of appreciation joined to instruction is obtained by the introduction at the end of each chapter of what is called a "Practice." This "Practice," a word used for want of a better one, includes further explanations, applications, comments and exhortations. In them occur such expressions as: "Dear Reader," which could better have been omitted.

This book offers no surprises for those who know their Actual Grace. For others it has both limitations and advantages. The method adopted by the author limits the richness and power of presentation to which Actual Grace, or, for that matter, any doctrinal subject lends itself. On the other hand, the book is a simple and unmistakably clear explanation of fundamentals. As such it merits the highest rating.

It can serve as a valuable aid for individual study, for the preparation of sermons and for teaching in High School and College. With its help, many more souls can come to a fuller knowledge and appreciation of Actual Grace.—L. A. CORESSEL, S.J.

**HUMILITY OF HEART.** By Father Cajetan Mary Da Bergamo, Capuchin. Translated by Herbert Cardinal Vaughan. Pp. 211. The Newman Bookshop, Westminster, Maryland, 1944. \$2.50.

This book of 153 paragraphs contains "Thoughts and Sentiments on Humility." Written in Italian by one who led the humble life of a Minor Capuchin, the book made a profound impression on Cardinal Vaughan who, as we are told in the introduction, "For more than thirty years had known and studied that work and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say he had made it during the last fourteen years of his life, his constant companion, his vade mecum." To the Cardinal we are indebted for the present excellent translation of Father Cajetan's treatise on humility.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first of these gives us a clear idea of humility, its necessity, its excellence and its motives and arouses in us a fervent desire to practise it. In the four succeeding chapters we have treatises on a practical examen on the virtue of humility, humility towards God, towards our neighbor, and towards oneself. Finally, there is the chapter "Moral Doctrine on the Vice of Pride and the best Use to be made of the Practical Examen."

Each of the 153 paragraphs furnishes ample matter for one or more meditations. Containing sublime and practical reflections, the book shows us how to obtain that humility of heart wherein "the soul," as Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J., tells us in his introduction, "will find a sovereign remedy for its many ills, a matchless balm for its many wounds, while a soul-beauty all its own will spring up in all who shall learn how to use it wisely under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."—M. F. KENNELLY, S.J.

**THREE RELIGIOUS REBELS.** By the Reverend M. Raymond, O.C.S.O.  
Pp. xiv + 326. P. J. Kenedy and Sons, New York, 1944. \$2.75.

Father Raymond's new book introduces three Cistercian reformers: St. Robert, the Rebel; St. Alberic, the Radical; and St. Stephen Harding, the Rationalist. The events in the lives of these heroes of the famed monastery of Cîteaux were hunted down by a fellow-worker, Father Amadeus, the "Ferret." Father Raymond, the "Scribe," has "thought it well to dramatize" the events, using "the appropriate local color and atmosphere" (p. xi). Under such treatment the Rebel Saints live again, and their lives will be to religious today—what they were to contemporary monks—a challenge to all-out chivalry in the service of God.

For the average reader these saints are making a first appearance. He would like to meet them, get their names, shake hands, start a conversation, and strike up a friendship. Instead these strangers collide with him, volunteer their nicknames, and proceed to wrangle. Such an informal encounter, while it may startle the apathetic into a quick friendship, may engender in the sympathetic but a slight, passing acquaintance.

The three Rebels unfold their characters in dialogue which is always interesting but often not distinctive enough. All three have a good deal of the author's own accent in their voices. They all partake of his appetite for word-play. Their ideas and expressions have a curious admixture of the atmosphere of the medieval chapter room

with that of the modern lecture hall in psychology. The startled friend will exclaim: "How modern these ancient monks were!" The acquaintance will be curious to know *what* the "Ferret's" sources said, and *how far* the "Scribe" has gone in dramatic interpretation.

Father Raymond's application of "March of Time" methods to hagiography is an undoubted contribution and will always enjoy popularity. Dramatized biography, however, has its limitations, as the difficult stage setting of these three lives shows. In sketching the times for the reader, using "only broad, bold strokes without shading," the author has not painted an adequate picture of the shady spots of what were not really "Dark Ages." Broad, bold strokes, though giving a strong impression of the reforms of Citeaux, leave a wrong impression of the then declining Cluny. That other branch of Benedictinism had made a memorable contribution to ecclesiastical reform, and one would like to see the declining years of that mother monastery done with more delicate shading. Again, it is one thing to defend the white habit (pp. 195-197); it is another to debunk the black. That may offend.

Despite these limitations, these dramatized lives will be a tasty sauce to one's spiritual reading. For a regular diet, however, religious will find more objective biographies, such as Walsh's recent work on St. Teresa the Reformer (REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, III, pp. 55, 56), on the whole a great deal more satisfying.

—C. T. HUNTER, S.J.

**HER SILENCE SPEAKS.** By the Reverend John S. Middleton, Ph.D.  
Pp. xi + 134. P. J. Kenedy and Sons, New York, 1941. \$1.25.

Mary speaks seven times in the Gospels. With these seven occasions as his point of departure, the author has effectively evolved seven reflections on Mary's message to us. The theme of these seven reflections is clearly indicated in the prologue: "... to tell the praise of holy silence and to extoll the art of divine listening." Reflections entitled, "Fearless Fear," "Victorious Surrender," and "The Gift to Give," are developed from the words spoken by Mary to the Angel Gabriel; "Joy Without Pleasure" is based on the Magnificat; "Longing Loneliness" is inspired by Mary's words spoken on the occasion of the finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple; "Divine Humanism," and "Saving Generosity" are based on Mary's words to the servants at the Marriage Feast of Cana.

Apt quotations from the writings of St. Augustine, St. John of

the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Ignatius, St. Francis de Sales and others are interspersed generously throughout the book.

For religious living in a world at war, these reflections have a special meaning—peace begins at home. "We are all prayerfully pleading with God to quiet the roaring guns of destruction and to send us His peace. Too infrequently, however, do we reflect that the return of peace to the individual soul has its necessary effects on a return of peace to the world at large."

Affective meditation on the sublime thoughts contained in this little book will prove an effective means of bringing peace to the soul of the reader and through him to those with whom he may come in contact.—J. C. BABB, S.J.

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.** By Hans Meyer. Translated by the Reverend Frederic Eckhoff. Pp. viii + 581. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1944. \$5.00.

Hans Meyer's *Thomas von Aquin* originally appeared in 1938. The learned periodicals of Europe welcomed the book warmly, if somewhat uncritically. German reviewers in particular were enthusiastic, perhaps because of the poverty of such studies on St. Thomas in their language. More mature deliberation leads to the conclusion that the work is extensive rather than exhaustive; its breadth exceeds its depth.

The author's purpose is to present a systematic exposition of the philosophy of St. Thomas in its historical perspective. The work opens with an introductory appraisal of the historical influences on the thought of St. Thomas, and the Angelic Doctor's own contribution to philosophy. Then follow four sections dealing with the structure of individual things, the hierarchy of the forms of being, the origin and corruption of things, and order in the universe. This last section, about one half of the book, is the most valuable and original contribution Dr. Meyer makes toward an understanding of St. Thomas. He holds that the concept which goes deepest into the heart of Thomistic thought is the idea of order. "Unity in the natural order, unity in the supernatural order, and the coordination of both in the higher unity of the divine plan of creation and preservation, this was the guiding principle of St. Thomas." In this appreciation of the magnificent order of the vast Thomistic synthesis, the author stands on firmer ground, and is in a more con-

genial atmosphere, than in his treatment of purely metaphysical problems.

Dr. Meyer is most sincere in his effort rightly to conceive the structure of the Thomistic system; but he has failed to understand some of the cardinal points of Thomistic metaphysics. Consequently his criticism is at times inadequate. His account of the basic Thomistic doctrine on matter and form is the distorted version found in non-Thomistic manuals of Scholastic philosophy. He recognizes that St. Thomas taught a real distinction between essence and existence, but marvels that he defended the theory. Dr. Meyer casually disposes of the problem in a way that is scarcely complimentary to the philosophical acumen of St. Thomas: "The theory of the real distinction maintains that the existing essence of a thing is really distinct from its existence, which is contradictory." This is an ambiguous statement of the position. What St. Thomas and Thomists have always taught is that in a created being the essence is really distinct from its existence; the essence which exists because it is actuated by the act of existence, is really distinct from the act of existence by which it is actuated.

In spite of a number of such misrepresentations and superficial criticisms, the book should prove a useful addition to Thomistic literature. The author's wholesome attitude of challenge to the philosophy of Aquinas should have a sobering effect on those lyrical admirers of St. Thomas who seem at times to think that philosophy came to an end with the thirteenth century. No one would be more surprised than St. Thomas himself at the notion that philosophy can progress no further. No one is less a Thomist than he who slavishly clings to St. Thomas. "No philosophical system is free from error or limitations; not even the Thomistic system." St. Thomas had many erroneous views concerning physics, astronomy, biology, and the functions of the heavenly bodies. Such misconceptions inevitably affected his philosophical conclusions. Again, since his day many questions and problems have arisen which he ignored or simply did not envisage.

Another point that is sometimes overlooked, but not by Dr. Meyer, is that St. Thomas was above all a theologian, and only secondarily a philosopher. The wealth of excellent books on the thought of Aquinas in recent decades almost universally stresses his philosophy, so that people who like to read about St. Thomas rather than read St. Thomas tend to forget that his chief glory and

his chief value to the world lie in the realm of theology.

The book, notwithstanding its shortcomings, was worth translating; and Father Eckhoff has done his job well. He generally renders Meyer's German with extraordinary skill. But often he merely paraphrases, and often he simply leaves out words and phrases difficult to translate. For some reason that is not apparent, he occasionally refrains from translating sentences, particularly at the end of paragraphs, and even omits whole paragraphs. Now and then he fails in fidelity to the author's thought. For example, the English version states that matter is being *per se*, while the same page 63 assures us that matter is being *per accidens*; Meyer, however, says that matter is being *per se*, and is non-being *per accidens*. A graver error occurs on page 98, where we read that "a substance endowed with reason is called a person." If this were true, the human nature of Christ would be a person, and Nestorius would be vindicated. Meyer is not guilty of this lapse; he says that a supposit or hypostasis endowed with reason is called a person.

The translator was quite justified in omitting footnote references to modern German and French monographs; but he has detracted from the utility of the book by omitting very many of the author's references to the works of St. Thomas. He has given us a good index, but has unfortunately not included the valuable bibliography found at the end of the German edition. Something by way of introduction would have been appropriate; not even the title page carries the information that Hans Meyer is (or was) professor of philosophy at the University of Würzburg, and that he is the author of a number of works dealing especially with the history of ancient philosophy. Such information would enable the reader to judge that the present volume is the fruit of more than a generation of scholarly activity.

The book will not be very intelligible to readers who have not passed at least the tyro stage of acquaintance with philosophy. It contains little new for professors or students well advanced in reading along Scholastic lines. It is, however, a fresh summary of Thomistic thought, and emphasizes the extensive use St. Thomas made of preceding philosophies in constructing his masterly synthesis.—CYRIL VOLLERT, S.J.

## Second Year of Novitiate

Adam C. Ellis, S.J.

THE FRENCH Revolution, Josephism in the Austrian Empire, and other political theories inimical to the Church had all but destroyed the religious life in Europe by the end of the eighteenth century. Very many monasteries and convents had either been suppressed or were forbidden to take novices. As a result many beneficent labors of the religious in behalf of the social needs of the Church were brought to a standstill. But it was imperative that these spiritual and corporal works of mercy should not be abandoned altogether. Divine Providence inspired devoted laymen and women to step into the breach—to take up the task of teaching Christian Doctrine to children, and of caring for the sick, the aged, and the orphans. Eventually these zealous laborers banded together into small groups in order to work together more efficiently; then they began to live together in community, and with the permission of their local Ordinary they took simple, private vows and wore a common garb. Recognized officially neither by Church nor State, they carried on their work valiantly. Eventually the Church rewarded their zealous efforts. At first approval was given only to their constitutions; but, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century, the Holy See approved the institutes themselves as congregations with simple vows.

Many of the founders of these modern congregations realized that men and women whose vocation it was to strive for perfection in the active life needed a longer period of probation than the single year of novitiate commonly prescribed for cloistered religious. Hence these founders ordained that all candidates undergo a second year of novi-



tiate before the first profession of vows. Furthermore, some provided in their constitutions that the novices should be employed in the external works of the congregation during their second year. This was done to determine whether they were fitted for this kind of work, and to give them opportunity to adjust their spiritual life to the distractions and trials of the active apostolate.

The Sacred Congregation of Religious consistently refused to permit novices to be so employed during the first year of novitiate. This practice of the S. Congregation passed into the legislation of the *Normae* of 1901. After stating in Art. 73 that novices were not to be engaged in the study of the arts and sciences nor in the external work of the institute, Art. 74 continued as follows: "Where there are two years of novitiate, the first is to follow all the prescriptions laid down above for the one (canonical) year. During the second year, however, the novices may engage moderately in studies or in other works of the institute always under the direction and vigilance of the master; this is to be done in the novitiate house itself, but not outside of it, unless grave reasons advise otherwise."

The Code of Canon Law was promulgated on Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 1917, and began to bind on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, 1918. Since the legislation of the Code superseded the old *Normae*, upon which most of the constitutions of modern congregations were based, it became necessary for all religious institutes to revise their constitutions in order to bring them into conformity with the Code. Superiors, therefore, were interested to find out what the Code had to say in regard to the second year of novitiate. They found very little. Canon 555, § 2 allowed a second year of novitiate if the constitutions prescribed it, but stated that this second year was not required for the validity of the subsequent profession of



vows, unless this condition was explicitly stated in the constitutions. That was all the information the Code offered regarding the second year. Hence various questions arose which were eventually sent to the Congregation of Religious for a solution. Since canon 565, § 3 forbade novices to engage in studies or in the external works of the institute "during the year of novitiate," did the same prohibition apply also to the second year? Again, some congregations that employed novices in external work, as was permitted by their constitutions, preferred to do this during the first year (as a means of trying out the novices), and then to devote the second year exclusively to their spiritual formation. Was this permitted under the new Code? Such questions, and others similar to them, and the fact that various provisions concerning this matter were found in many constitutions which had been revised according to the Code and submitted to the Holy See for approval—all induced the Congregation of Religious to make a careful study of the subject. This study resulted in the "Instruction on the Second Year of Novitiate" in which all such questions are answered and the fundamental principles which governed the practice of the Church during the past ninety years are brought to the attention of all superiors of institutes having two years of novitiate.

There are four cardinal points in the instruction.<sup>1</sup> Let us consider each one in turn.

*1. Spiritual Formation of the Novice is the Principal Purpose of the Second Year.*

"It is quite right that a novitiate of more than one year be prescribed in some institutes, especially among those whose members are employed in external works, since they, distracted by various cares and more exposed to the dangers

<sup>1</sup>For the text of this Instruction see pp. 122-123 of this issue.

of the world, need a more firm and solid spiritual foundation. Hence this Sacred Congregation orders that even during the second year of novitiate the discipline of the spiritual life be especially taken care of in preference to any other duties whatsoever."

The Instruction positively approves a second year of novitiate. But the principal purpose of this second year must be to intensify the spiritual training of the novice. Everything else must be subservient to this end.

Certainly novices destined to be employed in the active life of teaching, nursing, social service, and similar works need a firm and solid spiritual foundation. Religious congregations engaged in these external works of charity are not mere pious associations of teachers, or nurses, or social workers. They are, first and foremost, religious. Their primary aim, therefore, is to strive after perfection by the observance of the evangelical counsels, to which they bind themselves by the vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty, as well as by the observance of the rules and constitutions which are proper to them (see canons 487, 488, and 593). From this it is evident that second year novices are to continue in that spiritual training which is prescribed by canon 565, § 1 of the Code, and which is referred to in the Instruction. This training is to be accomplished in two ways. The first is informative and consists in the study of the rule and the constitutions, and in instruction regarding the nature of the vows and of all Christian virtues. The second consists in training the will of the novice by pious meditations and assiduous prayer, as well as by exercises suitable to the uprooting of vices, to regulating the emotions of the soul, and to the acquirement of virtues.

In addition to the general purpose of the religious life, which is common to all, each institute has its own specific end or purpose. During the time of probation this specific

purpose must also be taken into account. Hence the novice should be trained to adjust his spiritual life to the form which this specific purpose of his institute prescribes.

In a congregation devoted to the external works of charity, this training consists in teaching the novice how to maintain union with God amidst the distractions and cares of apostolic activity. Furthermore, it aims to develop that mastery of self which is required in order that the religious may edify men by his modesty, by the well regulated use of all his senses, and by the perfection of his conduct in dealing with them in his external activities.

Hence it follows that, even though the second year novices may be employed to a limited extent in the external works of the institute, they must still continue the exercises of meditation and prayer, and must receive the instructions which are prescribed for novices. It would be contrary to the spirit of the Instruction to limit them, during the time devoted to external works, to that minimum performance of these exercises which is required of the professed religious.

## *2. Manner of Exercising External Works*

First of all it should be noted that the Instruction allows the novices to be employed in external works only when the constitutions allow it. "Whenever the constitutions prescribe a second year of novitiate and allow the novices to be employed in the works proper to the institute during it, this may be permitted."

Supposing that the constitutions do permit it, the Instruction lays down these three conditions: (1) it must be done "with prudence and moderation, (2) only for the purpose of training the novices, (3) who must be engaged in such work under the direction and supervision of a mature religious who should instruct them by word and example."

*Prudence and moderation* dictate that the novices should not be employed in these works for too long a time each day (not more than three or four hours), that they should not be overburdened with work or studies, nor exposed to too great trials or temptations.

*Only for purpose of training the novices.* Hence "the novices may never be so employed in these works that they perform them alone (for example, taking the place of absent teachers or instructors, or ministering to the sick in hospitals)." The reason for these restrictions is evident. To assign novices to teach a regular class which requires considerable preparation, or to appoint them as regular nurses would be too great a responsibility for those who are still in the period of religious formation and would impose a burden upon them which is hardly compatible with other exercises of the novitiate from which they may not be dispensed. The result of such employment might well be either the neglect of the other duties of the novitiate in order to fulfill the office entrusted to them, or discouragement arising from the impossibility of carrying two burdens at once. Therefore the Instruction does not permit the novices to perform these offices alone or to act as substitutes for absent teachers or nurses. They may and should act as assistants to other mature religious who will instruct them by word and example, and thus afford them an excellent opportunity of learning how to combine the roles of Mary and Martha without putting too much strain upon their eager but undeveloped powers.

### 3. *Outside the Novitiate House*

Generally speaking, novices may not be sent to another house in order to be employed in the external works of the institute. "If it is ever permitted by the constitutions that a novice be sent out of the novitiate house to do the work

of the institute during the second year, this should be only by way of exception and only when some grave reason requires it." Hence, if a novitiate is attached to a school or hospital, the need of sending the novices to another house for this employment in external works will scarcely arise. Even in this case, an exception might be made for a difficult character, or for a doubtful vocation, or for reasons of health.

If the novitiate house is not attached to a school or hospital, or is not situated near one to which the novices can easily go and return the same day, it may be necessary at times to send some of the novices to other houses for the period of external employment. This may be done, however, only by way of exception and only for a grave reason. But it should be carefully noted that, "This grave reason should have reference to the novice; for example, because he or she cannot be adequately trained in the house, or because he or she for some other reason cannot remain there. But the necessity or the advantage of the religious institute itself may never under any pretext be considered a sufficient cause; as, for example, if the novices were to be substituted for the regular members in the work of the institute because of a lack of religious." It is never permitted, therefore, to send all the novices, or even the greater part of them, to some other house for the purpose of study or employment in the external works of the institute. To do so because of the immediate needs of a shorthanded community would be today, what it was branded by the S. Congregation ninety years ago (in 1856), "an intolerable abuse."

#### *4. Cessation from External Works*

"Two months before their profession of vows, whether they have remained in the novitiate house or out of it, the novices shall abstain from all external work. If they have

been out of the novitiate, let them be recalled. During the entire two months before their profession let them prepare themselves for it by strengthening themselves in the spirit of their vocation." Freed from the distractions and anxieties of their employment in external works, the novices will have time for reflection regarding their conduct during the period of employment. They should ask themselves how they have succeeded and in what they have failed, and thus reap the fruits of their period of trial or probation in the active labors of the institute. Finally, they will now be able to prepare themselves calmly and quietly for the great event of their lives—their consecration to God in the religious state by means of their first profession.

### *Obligation of the Instruction*

Although entitled an "Instruction," this document of the Congregation of Religious has a preceptive character. It is not a mere counsel or a mere directive norm. This is evident from the following excerpts from the text: "His Holiness approved the contents of this Instruction and ordered that it be observed by all." "The Sacred Congregation orders that even during the second year of novitiate the discipline of the spiritual life be especially taken care of in preference to any other duties whatsoever." "The necessity or the advantage of the religious institute itself may never, under any pretext be considered a sufficient cause." "Two months before their profession of vows . . . the novices shall abstain from all external work."

The Instruction does not oblige religious orders, since very few of them have a second year of novitiate; and the few that do are sufficiently provided for by the limitations to external work found in their constitutions. It does oblige all congregations which by the prescription of their constitutions have a second year of novitiate. No exceptions are

indicated; hence it binds diocesan congregations as well as those which have been approved by the Holy See.

The Instruction applies to the *second year* of novitiate only, since any employment of novices in the external works of the Institute during the first (or canonical) year of novitiate is positively forbidden by canon 565, § 3. This prohibition of external works during the first year has been the constant practice of the Sacred Congregation from the beginning. It was confirmed even after the Instruction was issued by an answer of the Code Commission, dated February 12, 1935, which stated that the permission of the Holy See must be obtained in order to transfer the "canonical year" of novitiate to the second year.

### *Conclusion*

We can and do sympathize with superiors who are harassed on the one hand by insistent calls for more help in schools, in hospitals, in social centers, and on the missions, and on the other hand by an ever increasing demand for higher standards of preparation for work in these various fields which require longer years of training. It is not to be wondered at that sometimes they are tempted to cut corners in regard to the training of their novices so that they may be "sent to the front" just a little sooner. But let them be convinced that the greatest service they can render the Church and their own institute is to give their novices as thorough a training as possible in the spiritual life. Let them rest assured that the better and the more exclusive this training is during the novitiate, the better and greater will be the work done by these same religious later on; for they will have laid a solid foundation upon which to build their spiritual structure and consequently they will be able to weather the storms and trials of the active apostolate. Any superior who reflects calmly and quietly on this mat-



ter must come to see the folly and shortsightedness of curtailing this fundamental training in any way. Let them take their courage in both hands and learn to say a decisive NO to all demands upon their personnel which can be met only by sacrificing this training or by curtailing it even a little. If they observe the laws of the Church in their entirety, God will bless their work and send them an abundance of qualified candidates to carry on the glorious apostolate of the active life.

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### BOOKLETS

*My Prayer Book*, compiled by Rev. Julius Grigassy, D.D. A prayer book in English and Slavonic for American Catholics of the Greek (Slavonic) Rite. Pp. xix + 652. Prices: semi-flexible cover, \$1.50; cloth cover, \$2.00; imitation leather, \$2.50. May be obtained from: "Prosvita-Enlightenment," 611 Sinclair Street, McKeesport, Pa., or from "Amer. Russky Viestnik," Gr. Cath. Union Bldg., Munhall, Pa.

*Symbols of Christ: Vol. I, The Old Testament.* By the Reverend Damasus Winzen, O.S.B. Drawings by William V. Cladek. A slim volume with board covers in which the author presents "a strictly scriptural interpretation of those symbols of the Old Testament which refer to the Messiah." Pp. 32. Price: \$1.00. May be obtained from St. Paul's Priory, Keyport, New Jersey.

*Blessings in Illness*, by the Reverend D. F. Miller, C.Ss.R. Here is an excellent booklet that deserves wide circulation. Written primarily for the sick, it may nevertheless be read with profit by everyone. From its pages all can learn to carry the cross with resignation, and even with joy. Pp. 96. Price: 25 cents. Published by Catechetical Guild, 128 East 10th Street, St. Paul 1, Minnesota.

*Quote the Gospel.* An English Adaptation of the French Compilation of Gospel Texts by Rev. V. Lelievre, O.M.I. This is a booklet which priests and seminarians may find helpful in the preparation of sermons and meditations. In it the author has collected under topical headings a great number of Gospel texts, many of which are compiled according to his personal interpretation. There is an index. Pp. 72. Price: 50 cents. Published by Catechetical Guild (address above).

*My Requiem Missal and Mass Card with My Indulged Day for My Dear Departed*, by Father Joseph F. Stedman. This is another in the series of popular missals by the same author. It contains the prayers used at funeral, month's mind, and anniversary Masses. Of special value is a section of questions and answers concerning Purgatory and Indulgences. Pp. 128. Price: 25 cents; for clergy, 20 cents. Published by Confraternity of the Precious Blood, 5300 Fort Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn 19, N. Y.



## Holy Communion and Spiritual Progress

Clarence McAuliffe, S.J.

**A**MONG the seven stars composing the sacramental constellation, the Holy Eucharist shines with a special brilliancy. This is evident from the fact that Christ Himself is physically present in this sacrament. The other six possess a moral lustre in so far as they were instituted by Christ, are conferred in His name, and transmit in a special way the merits of His passion; but only in Holy Communion does Christ come to us, as we say, "in Person," to remain physically present within us for a short period of time. Hence no Catholic doubts that the Holy Eucharist towers above the other sacramental rites in excellence and nobility.

But theologians give another reason also for the super-eminent position of the Eucharist. This is to be found, not only in the general opinion that Holy Communion probably bestows more sanctifying grace than the other sacraments, but particularly in the fact that Holy Communion is intended to produce a transcendent special effect, namely the stirring of the soul to more intimate union with Christ by acts of love.

Love is the core of the spiritual life. It is the hub about which the spokes of all the other virtues revolve and to which they all point. Love is the gauge of sanctity. It is the driving force behind many of the acts of self-sacrifice, of heroic resignation, of arduous initiative that we see constantly bubbling up to the surface of the Church's life. The Sacrament, therefore, whose direct aim is to incite its recipient to acts of love, can rightfully claim a singular dignity.

Ever increasing union with God in this life and perfect union with Him in the next is the goal of all religious and priests. This is simply saying that all of us want to love God more and more from day to day until that love is capped with direct vision and complete satisfaction in heaven. Now every devout reception of Holy Communion should notably further this love and union. Each time that Christ becomes physically present within us, He knocks at our hearts repeatedly, He prods our unresponsive selves to put off the sordid loves of earth and put on a glowing affection for Himself. If we answer these knocks of actual grace by making our thanksgiving after Communion to the best of our ability, every sacramental reception of Christ will raise us higher on the unending ladder of divine love.

And each upward step in love means a corresponding upward step in union with God, for the effect of love is to unite the lovers. We see this in the devoted lives of husband and wife, of children and parents, and in the assimilation resulting from all true friendship. This union simply means that the thoughts, desires, outlooks, views, actions, attitudes, wants and, to a restricted extent, even the feelings of lovers, become identified. Cooperation, then, with the divine impulses bestowed upon us in Holy Communion will infallibly produce in us a resemblance to the Master in our deliberate thoughts, desires, deeds, words and, to some degree, even in our imaginations and emotions. In other words, the special grace of Holy Communion is to enable us "to put on Christ," to achieve that perfection which is the obligation and privilege of us all.

Is there any comparison, any metaphor, which may enable us to understand more in detail the significance of this Godlike similarity consequent upon Holy Communion? There is. Nor is it a mere human invention, a figure of speech flashed from the lively imagination of some theo-

logian in his divine meditations. It comes from the lips of Christ Himself. He was the first to call the Eucharist, *food*. What food does for the body, Holy Communion does for the soul. "My flesh is meat indeed: and My blood is drink indeed" (John 6:56). "I am the living *bread* that came down from heaven . . . and the *bread* that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world" (John 6:51, 52). Basing its teaching upon this divine analogy, the Council of Florence spun out the metaphor in greater detail. It expressly declares that just as these four beneficial effects—namely growth, repair, maintenance and pleasure—result in the human body from wholesome food, so the same effects redound upon the spiritual life of the soul through the reception of Holy Communion. Here then we have delineated more minutely the fruits that ripen from the inspirations of love engendered by this sacrament. By means of them our spiritual health is increased, repaired, maintained, and exhilarated.

The infant is a mite of a few pounds when it comes into this world, but it begins to gain weight very quickly. It grows and grows through childhood, adolescence, manhood until it reaches a certain more or less fixed bodily stature. All this growth would be impossible without food. Sleep, fresh air, exercise are only auxiliaries to this development; its real cause is wholesome food. Now the Council of Florence, already referred to, declares that growth in the spiritual life is a product of Holy Communion. The Council does not mean merely that each Holy Communion enlarges the store of sanctifying grace within us. This is true of all sacraments and is, of course, the most precious gift bestowed by them. But in addition to this, the Council here includes particularly that increase in intimacy with God, that beauteous blending of our intentions, thoughts, and actions with those of Christ achieved

through each devout Communion. Food adds to the size of the body: the food of Holy Communion augments our supernatural union with God.

Here we note a difference between the action of natural food and that of Holy Communion. When we partake of bodily sustenance, our bodies themselves are the active agents. We swallow, dissolve, digest, and assimilate the nutriment; we change it into ourselves. The food itself is largely passive. But in Holy Communion, the food which is Christ Himself is the active principle. This Sacred Food strikes fire from our sluggish souls. It works upon us, turns our minds and hearts to God. All that is required of us is a good disposition, a readiness, an alertness to heed the urgent pleas of love spontaneously arising from the presence of our Lover, Christ. This is what St. Augustine means when he imagines our Lord speaking to the soul after Holy Communion as follows: "You will not change Me into yourself as you do bodily food: rather you will be changed into Me."

This growth in love for Christ will never reach in this life a point where it cannot be increased. The size of the human body is definitely restricted. Stature is limited for the race as a whole and for each individual in particular. But God wished no limitations placed upon love for Himself. Holy Communion is not bounded by horizons. It shows a pathway of love mounting up to the highest star, and then going beyond it to the infinity of God Himself.

Again, the human body is always on the downgrade. After a few hours of labor, it experiences a certain discomfort, a lassitude. Its blood clamors for fresh corpuscles, its nerves for reinvigoration. If these symptoms are not heeded, damage will result to the body. But good food will offset the danger. It will repair the devitalized energies of the weary body. The experienced mountain climber never ven-

tures forth without his pack of raisins. He knows that a few hours of struggle with a rugged mountain peak will exhaust his energy. A brief stop to consume a quantity of raisins will restore his strength.

Our lives of union with God are on the downgrade constantly just as surely as are our bodies. In our weakened spiritual condition since the fall of Adam, we cannot dodge all the enfeebling darts of semi-deliberate venial sins without a special privilege granted, as far as we know, only to the Blessed Virgin. Every day we give in, partially at least, to the ill-favored breezes of one or other minor passion—to jealousy, egotism, vanity, impatience, laziness, curiosity, and so on. The spiritual weakness consequent upon these petty falls hampers the development of our union with God. Confession is the most salutary way of healing these wounds and their attendant weakness. But Holy Communion also can remit at least some of them even before confession. In fact, if our dispositions at the time of Communion are sufficiently excellent, the Lord's banquet may remove them all. Moreover, this partial or total erasure of such semi-deliberate transgressions is automatic or spontaneous. That is to say, it is partly due to the energy of the sacrament itself, which makes up for the inadequacy of our own subjective dispositions. On our part, of course, we must have contrition for these faults, but we need not detest and grieve over each of them distinctly. A general sorrow which includes them all will suffice. Thus Holy Communion, like material food, restores our spiritual energies. As the Council of Trent explicitly declares: this sacrament is "an antidote by which we are freed from daily faults."

Food performs yet another service for the human body. It *maintains* health. With every breath we inhale poisonous germs into our systems. We are literally surrounded

and even impregnated with dangerous bacteria capable of snuffing out our life were they not warded off by sound organs, rich blood, and healthy tissues, kept fit by the assimilation of good food. We hear much these days of the dangers of malnutrition. "The people," we say, "in some impoverished countries may be decimated by epidemics of one kind or another because their diet has been deficient for some time both in quantity and quality." If we can get food to their aid, the hazard will be averted. Food will maintain their health.

In the same way the spiritual life of union with God must be kept fit against its enemies. No person, no matter how holy, is immune to temptations of the most revolting kind. The world, the flesh and the devil will never cease completely their onslaughts upon virtue; and they sometimes keep up a long and harrowing siege around the sacred precincts of God's chosen ones. Holy Communion is a special Food dropped from heaven to steel us against surrender. It is the Sacrament of Love; and love can endure anything. That is why the Council of Trent says that Holy Communion "preserves us from mortal sins." That is why the priest when he distributes Holy Communion to us declares: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ *preserve* your soul unto everlasting life." The soul sanctified by the divine Manna has strength to fight its way unharmed through the wilderness of temptation.

Ordinarily this power of resistance to evil results from Holy Communion indirectly. That is to say, since the main benefit of the Heavenly Banquet is to foster ardent love, and since an increase of love necessarily entails a more firm resolve not to offend the Beloved, the communicant is necessarily fortified against temptation. But theologians commonly admit that in exceptional cases Holy Communion may have a direct effect upon the body itself. Just as it

is a safe, though not certain, opinion to hold that Extreme Unction sometimes restores bodily health directly, so too Holy Communion may wither the noxious weeds of concupiscence or at any rate stunt their unruly growth. "If any one among you," says St. Bernard, speaking to the faithful of his time, "feels that the motions of anger, envy and incontinence are no longer so strong within you as they were, let him simply attribute it to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ received in Holy Communion."

Finally, the Council of Florence specifies that Holy Communion produces joy and gladness. Certainly the partaking of material food is a primary source of pleasure. Good meals keep up the morale of our soldiers; a banquet inspires exhilaration in its attendants; a mere crust of bread will give some satisfaction to a hungry man. Famine is one of the most depressing scourges that can befall a nation. Transferring all this to the Holy Eucharist, our supernatural Food, we may say that normally the communicant should experience a certain satisfaction, not only of a spiritual, but also of a sensible, nature during the period of Christ's presence within him. The reception of this sacramental food is the welcoming into our home of a charming Guest who is at the same time our best Friend, our closest Relative, our greatest Benefactor—One who is much dearer to us than wife to husband, than infant to mother—One who comes to us with the express purpose of exciting our love for Himself.

Nevertheless, the resulting deep undercurrent of satisfaction and tranquil joy may not always well up and overflow upon the shoals of bodily feeling. This may be due to various causes. One of the most common causes among religious is bodily fatigue from strenuous work, or positive ill-health. It is difficult to strike a harmonious note from the flabby string of a violin. In the same way it is difficult



for the human body to feel a cheerful thrill when its physical forces are at low ebb. In fact, this physical indisposition may bring it about that we are sometimes involuntarily distracted during the entire period of our thanksgiving after Holy Communion. We inculpably neglect all the loving impulses of the Master. In this event, we may trust in His goodness to increase our spirit of love for Him. God does not penalize those whose disability proceeds from labors undertaken through obedience on His behalf.

Summing up, then, we may say that the fruit of Holy Communion is an expansion, an acceleration, a burnishing of our active love for Christ. This fruit will be greater or less according to our dispositions at the time we receive Communion and according to our cooperation with the actual graces enkindled within us while He remains physically present. After each Communion our love for God should be on a permanently higher level than it was before. The fire of this love should consume many, if not all, of the tiny semi-deliberate faults to which we succumb every day. It should keep us spiritually fit to cope with any temptation that besets us. It should, sometimes at least, flame up into a sensible love, the natural product of intimacy among persons. Finally, this more fervent love for God will necessarily manifest itself in a more devoted love for our fellow-men, particularly for the members of His Mystical Body. Christ Himself has made the promise: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him . . . He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me" (John 6:57, 58).

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#### OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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## Ill-Health and the Apostolic Vocation

A Missionary<sup>1</sup>

VERY soon after entering the Novitiate I began to realize that there are foreign missions and to wish to be sent to them. Superiors were sympathetic, and finally I was sent. Then came golden days of action, days full of the exhilarating thought that one was a living stone in the foundation on which was rising the Church of the true God, in a land that had been swarming with pagans ever since Calvary, ever since Moses and Abraham and Noah—and beyond. Those golden days were filled with another thing, too—occasional and slowly increasing ill-health. I thought, however, that this unlooked-for and unwanted obstacle to the immense amount of work being done and to be done was not serious and would soon be overcome. It was consequently a great shock when the superior's letter came unexpectedly ordering a return to the province for medical attention. All this was years ago, now, more than I care to admit. For I still have ill-health to contend with, and still would like to be well again, would like to be strong again, would like to be in the foreign missions again. I have kept a journal during these years of sickness, and, while it is of no special importance, still a few excerpts from it may be of help to other religious who find ill-health thwarting their ambitions of apostolic activity, whether these holy ambitions center around a foreign mission or our own not-far-from-pagan U. S. A.

January 10th. Being sick gives one so many chances of

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<sup>1</sup>The intimate nature of the present article obviously makes it inadvisable for us to publish the name of the author.—ED.

suffering humiliation without anybody thereby offending God!

January 20th. At the eighth Station, our Lord consoles others, mindless of His own sufferings. How unlike myself, so preoccupied with mine!

April 20th. If I can do nothing else, I can at least—and will—spend my life trusting You, dear Jesus and Mary Immaculate.

April 22nd. Dear Jesus, thank you for letting me feel the effects of poverty every second, in that I lack what I need to return to the mission: health, permission, passport, visa, traveling-fare.

April 22nd. Dear Jesus, I know You know this already, but I like to kneel here before my vow crucifix and write to You, because I like to talk to You, but my poor head can't hold its thoughts, and that is why I write them. The mission is often in my thoughts and prayers, and my meaning is this—I HOPE, and PRAY trustingly to be returned to it. I WOULD LIKE to return, but I WANT to do Your holy will, to be sick or well, here or there or elsewhere, to live or die just as You want.

May 18th. I can say, "*There was a time* when I could preach, teach, go here or there among the pagans." *I can never say*, "*There was a time* when I could obey,"—implying that I can now no longer do so. By the grace of God, I can always obey, trust, love, adore, no matter what external work I may no longer be able or permitted to do.

May 22nd. How good God is to accept for His greater glory and the salvation and sanctification of souls not only the preaching, teaching, studying, cooking, and so forth of other religious, but also my enforced idling, my hours of sleeping and resting. Deo gratias!

May 23rd. There is no reason why I should go on living day after day save that in Your love You want to

give me with each new sunrise another chance to love You and to obey and trust You and to pray for souls.

May 23rd. When I take a siesta I perform an act of OBEDIENCE to the Superior and to the doctor who ordered it; of CONFIDENCE, in that I trust I shall awake alive or else go from sleep to Purgatory; of PRUDENCE, in that I must at long last learn to take care of whatever health and strength God gives me; of LOVE, in that every act of one consecrated to God is to be ruled by love of God; and of MORTIFICATION, in that I am, while lying down to sleep when others are working, mortifying the will which would rather see me up and preaching, teaching or doing some other work more worthy a missionary than sleeping away the working hours of the day.

June 23rd. I WANT to do what God wants of me, I WOULD LIKE to be well and working for souls in the mission. I try to do the first. I pray God for the second. If He doesn't, all right. That's that. Anyway, whether it be what I will to do or what I would like to do, I can still pray for the mission, and will always do so.

July 7th. I am praying not only for the mission, but also that God our Lord may yet be pleased to return me to it; and unless I am forbidden by superiors to hope that I shall return there, I shall go on begging God to let me go back.

September 2nd. "All the day long my shame is before me . . . and our heart has not turned back" (Ps. 43). Thanks be to God, I have had the grace I needed to accept gratefully and without discouragement the shame of over — years of being considered unfit that any active work be given me.

September 3rd. The Apostles after Tabor failed to cure the lunatic child, and the last — years I have failed to be cured, and have had, thanks be to God, so much

experience of my nothingness and good-for-nothingness. This has been good for me, for I was habitually very conceited—thinking myself not only something, but also a sort of super-something.

September 27th. Thanks be to God, who gives others such strength and health and talent and graces, and they thereby work for His greater glory. And thanks be to God who gives me the grace to be patient and grateful despite the foul demon of rebellion—for His greater glory, too. To others the grace TO DO, and to me the grace TO BE WELL CONTENT, even though God deny me their grace.

October 3rd. Dear Jesus, thank You for giving me some little work to do. I do not feel slighted—at least I have been trying, thanks to Your grace, not to feel slighted—when You do not give me work to do.

October 4th. God took the mission from me to teach me to seek for happiness in Him alone, to be attached to nothing as much as to His holy will.

October 5th. My days alternate between discouragement and confidence; but by the grace of God there is through them all a peace, at times quiet, at times ardent, from the certain knowledge I have that I please God and help in the salvation and sanctification of souls, regardless of whether I am sick or well, out of the mission or in the mission; and this is because God our Lord gives me the grace to desire above all else that He may lead me His way to His goal—whatever be the way and whatever the goal.

October 17th. If I were REALLY HUMBLE I would not be surprised that apostolic work in the mission should be taken from me to be given to another more worthy.

October 23rd. Thanks be to God, after —— years of sick leave, during which others have been laboring so much for God's glory and I so little more than not at all, it is

easier to have a low opinion of myself, to realize that I am a spiritual as well as an intellectual and physical pauper. Thanks be to God, I have more and more the grace to be content with God's arrangements, to rejoice that He deigns to use this nothingness as a religious.

November 28th. During community visit after supper it seemed to me that the real reason God sent me away from the mission was not that I might have medical treatment, but in order that I might be saved from the great danger to my soul and other souls which my absorption in external works was proving to be. I was ceasing to be God's laborer and becoming more and more just a laborer, busy because that was my habit and not because I loved God and wanted to do work for Him.

December 3rd. How I spoil God's gifts. He gave me suffering to sanctify me and others; and I use it to increase my selfishness, my self-centeredness!

December 7th. I do not know which is for God's greater glory: (1) to be cured and return to the mission, (2) to be cured and given work elsewhere, (3) to be sick the rest of my life, (4) to die and go to Purgatory and then to Heaven. In the midst of these uncertainties—thanks be to God, grace is given me to be indifferent—I rejoice in these certainties: (1) Jesus and Mary Immaculate love me more than I realize, (2) obedience through my rules and superiors tells me God's holy will, (3) by obeying and praying and suffering I become in God's holy hands, in our Lord's wounded hands, an instrument for the salvation and sanctification of souls in the missions and elsewhere.

December 8th. Dear Jesus, I don't know what you will do with me, and I don't care either. For You love me and I love You and I trust myself to You.

December 11th. I was saying, "Dear Jesus, how much I could do for You IF You would only give me back my

strength!" Then it occurred to me that I had better say, "Dear Jesus, how much I *can* do for You SINCE You always give me the grace I need to do for You whatever Your holy will is." Deo gratias!

December 14th. Dearest Master, I thank You for allowing me to do a little service to my fellow religious and thereby serve You in serving them for the mission. I was disconsolate at the thought that I had lost my work in the mission and had been given none in the province; and all the while Your loving mercy was giving me a three-fold work, TO YOU, IN MY FELLOW RELIGIOUS, FOR THE MISSION.

December 15th. It doesn't matter what I do if I do God's will, if I obey, if I love. God wants not my work, but my love.

December 20th. There is NO VACATION for a religious. Is no work assigned or allowed? Then must leisure be used to work the harder at becoming a saint, at loving God more, at interceding and atoning more for souls.

December 29th. A ciborium full of hosts was consecrated at Mass and then pushed back to the corner of the corporal so that it would not interfere with the Mass being said. I want to be like that ciborium. Even though I am not allowed to return to the mission or am not given work elsewhere, I want to do God's holy will quietly and entirely and unostentatiously like that ciborium—not hindering the great work of love that others are carrying on, and yet keeping Jesus all the while in my heart, ready to impart Him—without losing Him—to the souls, whoever and wherever they be, to which the servants of our Lord, my superiors, may take me.

## Three Preventives of "Exhaustion"

G. Augustine Ellard, S.J.

RECENTLY it was announced that psychiatrists in the United States Army have discovered three factors which tend to prevent "exhaustion" or "combat fatigue," that is, a condition of certain soldiers who without being wounded or diseased have become more or less unfit to continue fighting. They may have fought long and courageously; but now, though apparently physically well, they feel incapable of doing more; they are "exhausted," too greatly fatigued to go on. The three preventives are: *esprit de corps*, good leadership, and reasons for fighting.

It appears not unlikely that among religious there may sometimes be an analogous condition of "exhaustion," and that it may be avoided by the same three means.

The first preventive is *esprit de corps*. Among American service units its character and efficacy are best illustrated perhaps by the Marines. A Marine is taught from the beginning to feel that he is in the greatest fighting group in all the world. Hence there is every reason why he should have the utmost confidence in all his fellow Marines, and why he in turn must measure up to their expectations. The Marines' records are most glorious: they must not be allowed to be stained with anything that would dim their luster. Everybody, at least everybody in the American world, expects only what is most excellent and heroic from the Marines: he must not disappoint them. The importance of *esprit de corps* is recognized by the Army and Navy to be so great that they are careful to preserve the distinctive identity and historical continuity, with all their traditions

and glories, of each separate unit or division. The "Fighting Sixty-ninth" would be another example of a group in the American Army that is noted for its *esprit de corps*.

Religious orders and congregations also have their own *esprit de corps*. Sometimes it leads them into faults, for example, corporate pride or envy. But that is no reason why it should not be cultivated for the good that is in it. A religious naturally and rightly takes a certain pride in belonging to his order—otherwise why did he join it?—and if he should feel deeply and intimately with regard to it what is meant by *noblesse oblige*, that sense could be a powerful aid to living up to the ideals and to attaining the purposes of the order. The history and traditions of the institute can be a perennial fountainhead of inspiration and courage. Its professed aims are a standing challenge and stimulation to renewed or greater exertion. The examples of the founder and of distinguished members are a constant invitation to emulate them, and a clear proof of what members of the organization can achieve. One feels that it would be a shame not to give a good account of oneself in such company or to disappoint their hopes. The laurels of the order won and passed down by past generations must not be allowed to suffer now, but must be maintained and transmitted to the succeeding generation in all their brightness. They did well and nobly: why cannot I?

Every religious also belongs to a larger and more excellent group and should be helped by its *esprit de corps*, namely, the Mystical Body of Christ. The head of that body is an infinite source of confidence and inspiration, as the history of Christianity proves. Besides the head, there are uncounted multitudes of members of all sorts and conditions who are always pointing out both what can be done and what should be done by all who are honored with inclusion in that body. They illustrate and exemplify how



we may attain every moral excellence and beauty: the faith and zeal of the Apostles, the fortitude of the martyrs, the wisdom of the doctors, the justice of the confessors, and the purity of the virgins. How could a member of the Mystical Body of Christ realize what company he is in and not feel empowered and encouraged to accomplish the great works that everybody else in that organism expects from him?

Again a religious is also one of the family of the Divine Father, one of "the members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). By destination and potentially he is one of that glorious celestial society which for all eternity will rejoice in the companionship of the most blessed Trinity and in the enjoyment of all Its riches and possessions. But even now he is by grace a participant in the divine nature and life, an adoptive son of God, and a sharer in His providence and in the execution of His great cosmic plan. He could hardly reflect on such facts and not be strongly moved to do his very best. "Understand, O Christian, what dignity is yours! Made a partaker of the divine nature, do not by an unworthy life return to your former wretchedness" (St. Leo the Great). Here, above all, *noblesse oblige*.

The second preventive of breakdowns in soldiers noted by the Army psychiatrists is *good leadership*. It was observed that in particular units a very high or very low incidence-rate of such breakdowns could be attributed directly to especially bad or good leadership. Higher officers became so convinced of this fact that in some cases after investigation incompetent leaders were removed. No one will be surprized at the fact, though one may wonder at the magnitude of the consequences. When soldiers do not have a high regard for their officers, they can hardly, even with the very best will, give them enthusiastic support and cooperation. If confidence be lacking, doubt or misgivings will be present, and no group of men can whole-heartedly

risk their lives or limbs when they are not reasonably sure of their objectives and the means to attain them. On the other hand, history abundantly demonstrates the extreme, the apparently superhuman, extent to which human nature can go in bearing hardships or in attempting what otherwise would be impossible when men have sufficient hero-worship for their leader. Napoleon's followers, with their chauvinism, are an instance. A contemporary example of the devotion that leadership can inspire and of the tremendous transformation that it may work in a whole people may be seen in the German people with respect to their *Fuehrer* and among the Italians with respect to their *Duce*.

Similarly among religious respect and confidence in their superiors facilitate obedience and the accomplishment of the work of the order. Sometimes superiors are such that spontaneously and without effort their subjects feel esteem for them and confidence in them, and then of course there is no difficulty. Religious superiors, being men and women, have their faults, deficiencies, and inequalities; but in general they seem to be better than any other group of leaders, better, for instance, than military officers. That is true at least with reference to wisdom, virtue, and kindliness. But religious profess to follow divine as well as human leadership. Superiors, whether prudent or imprudent, good or bad, as long as they retain their authority and act within the limits of it, do provide divine guidance, and that is always good. A general cannot foresee and subordinate to his strategy the mistaken tactics of his colonels or captains. The infinite Leader of all persons and things, the divine and supreme Superior of all religious, does foreknow and wisely adapt to His purpose even the mistakes and errors of the human superiors who possess some of His authority. Hence, religious who are careful not to forget their own supernatural principles on the authority of their leaders can

and should have all the confidence and strength and devotion that divine leadership suggests. If God be guiding, why hesitate?

The third, and the greatest, preventive of "exhaustion" in soldiers consists simply in the conviction that they have good reasons for fighting. If their feeling is "What's the use?" it is psychologically impossible for them to achieve much. To be under the necessity of working, suffering, and perhaps dying without any sufficient compensating reason is merely a cruel fate, to be avoided if possible. But all the records of humanity show that with sufficient motivation most men will gladly and eagerly face all the hardships and dangers of war. Otherwise human history would not be so full of wars and bloodshed.

Unlike soldiers in the national armies, religious always really do have good reasons for keeping up the good fight. But their reasons are not so visible or tangible; and the trouble is that though they were apprehended vividly and highly appreciated when one was young and entered upon the fight, they tend to become obscured and to lose their force as time goes on.

Defense of the homeland against unjust aggression or invasion has always been considered a very satisfactory reason for fighting. Probably no motive has led to greater self-sacrifice and heroism on the field of battle than this. Religious are waging war in defense of the highest of all causes, namely, that of God. They are resisting those who would prevent or destroy in the minds and hearts of men the knowledge, love, and service of their Creator. They are struggling to uphold and vindicate the rights of God over His own creation. They are opposing those who would thwart God's benevolent designs to bring men to a share in His own excellence and life and happiness. The cause of Christ is always meeting with active hostility, and religious

are in the forefront of its defense. The Church is never without opposition, even violent opposition, in some part of the world; and religious are always glad to fly to her aid. Titanic forces of good and evil are competing for each and every immortal soul, and oftentimes it is the intervention of religious that tips the scale of battle in favor of the good. In fact it may be said that religious are engaged in an uninterrupted defense of all that is true and good and decent. In the last war men were willing to lay down their lives to make the world safe for democracy. Religious would like to make the whole world safe for theocracy. Our Army fights to protect "the American way of life"; religious, to guard the divine way of life.

The promotion of justice, order and peace—perpetual peace, if possible—is often proposed as a noble reason for fighting. War is waged to end all wars. If statesmen and military officers can appeal to such motives, religious can do so in a far higher and better sense. Justice between nations would indeed be a great thing; but supernatural justice toward God and then on the basis of that toward all other men, individually and collectively, would be a far grander and more fruitful objective. The world would indeed be happy if officials and soldiers could keep order in it, but it would be vastly happier still if religious could succeed in establishing it in perfect harmony with the divine order of things. Then there would be in men's souls that "peace of God which surpasseth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

If I mistake not, the men who are fighting World War II will be satisfied if their efforts bring the "four freedoms" to fruition; that is, freedom of speech, of worship, from want, and from fear. The work of religious does much to implement all that is good and right in those four freedoms as understood and proposed by Messrs. Churchill and

Roosevelt. Over and above that it strives to realize those same freedoms on a much higher plane. A man, for instance, who is instructed in the true philosophy of life and can discern and observe the distinction between liberty and license enjoys a better freedom of speech than another who takes it to consist in saying whatever comes into one's head. Persons whose religion is true and fully acceptable to the Supreme Being worshiped are really freer to worship than others who have a false religion or are groping after the true one. Besides promoting the social and economic reforms of the papal encyclicals (is there any better means to freedom from want?) religious do all they can to enrich people morally and spiritually, with the treasures that exist in heaven and are not endangered or diminished by rust or moths or thieves. Finally, the best of all forms of freedom from fear is that which is found in the friendship and protection of Almighty God, and religious endeavor to bring that about on the most extensive scale and in the highest degree.

Perhaps the attainment which would best please the men who are waging this war would be the establishment of an international organization with full authority to adjudicate in a rational and just manner all possible future disputes between sovereign states and with physical power amply sufficient to enforce its decisions. If that could be, we should have a return of the golden age or a sort of millennium. The work of religious tends to facilitate the realization of such a happy condition of things, but their aim goes beyond it. They would organize all men, both individuals and nations, in the kingdom of God. There men would find the maximum of liberty and security. They would understand and respect their relations to God, and with His light and grace be in the best position to live harmoniously in that universal organization which could

exclude suicidal armed conflicts. The knowledge and practice of the true religion and the right principles of morality would do more than any other force to remove the obstacles to such an international union and to bring about the fundamental attitudes of mind and will that would make it possible. With men organized under God in love and justice, statesmen could proceed to order international relations in accord with the papal directives proposed to the world in the Christmas allocutions of 1939 and 1944. Then finally there would be an end to wars, and men in peace and prosperity could devote themselves to self-advancement and mutual help rather than to self-slaughter.

To conclude, religious, who serve as soldiers of God, can find in their own *esprit de corps*, in the divine quality of their leadership, and in the supreme excellence of their reasons for keeping up the good fight, three effective preventives of "exhaustion" and "combat fatigue," and three means of carrying on bravely and perseveringly to victory.

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### Books Received

(From December 20 to February 20)

ST. JOHN'S ABBEY PRESS, Collegeville, Minn.

*Introductio in Codicem.* Adm.R.P.Udalricus Beste, O.S.B., I.C.D. \$7.65.

B. HERDER BOOK CO., St. Louis.

*A Preface to Newman's Theology.* By the Reverend Edmond Darvil Benard, M.A., S.T.D. \$2.35.

JOSEPH F. WAGNER, Inc., New York.

*Sister Helen the Lithuanian Flower.* By the Reverend Joseph R. Maciulionis, M.I.C. (Price not listed.)

THE NEWMAN BOOKSHOP, Westminster, Md.

*An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation.* By George O'Brien, Litt.D., F.R.Hist.S., etc. \$2.50.

THE MONTFORT FATHERS, Bay Shore, New York.

*The Reign of Jesus through Mary.* By Gabriel Denis, S.M.M. \$1.00.

PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARY, New York.

*Pope Pius XII: Priest and Statesman.* By Kees Van Hoek. \$2.00.

THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY, Milwaukee.

*The Bond of Peace.* By Michael Kent. \$2.00.

OLIVER AND BOYD LTD., Edinburgh.

*The Sacrifice We Offer.* By Hubert McEvoy, S.J. Price 3/6.

## The Fast Before Communion

Gerald Kelly, S.J.

**W**HY must we fast before Communion? How did the obligation arise? How serious is it? Is one ever excused from it? Is it hard to get a dispensation? Do sick people need a dispensation? What privileges have the members of the armed forces? What is the privilege for defense-workers? In how many ways may one compute midnight? What if I "just forget" and take a glass of water? If I wake up at night and take a drink of water, do I have to look at the clock to see if I have broken my fast? Is the fast broken: if I swallow blood from a nosebleed? if I swallow a piece of matchstick? if I breathe in and swallow snowflakes, or a rain-drop, or a gnat? if lint from blankets or towels gets into my mouth? if I rinse my mouth, gargle, brush my teeth? if tears, or perspiration, or water from a showerbath should trickle into my mouth? if I take just one little aspirin? If I have a bite of sandwich in my mouth, do I have to take it out when the clock strikes twelve? What if I have just started on a piece of hard candy or a coughdrop? Do I have to abstain from Communion if I'm not sure that I've broken my fast?

If you can answer all those questions, you can learn little or nothing from this article. If you cannot answer them, you may learn something; and you are very likely eager to learn, because this subject is usually quite interesting to frequent communicants and to those who have to teach catechism and answer other people's questions.

Personally I have long been keenly interested in the fast before Communion; and I think this interest was enkindled by an incident that took place when I was prefect of the junior division at "Tom Playfair's School."



One of the boys of the division had met a sudden and tragic death, and the other boys had spontaneously agreed on a general Communion for him. On the morning of the Communion day the boys were unusually quiet and businesslike in the washroom; hence I did not have to do my customary prodding them on to Mass. All I had to do was stand in the corridor outside the washroom and be ready for difficulties. A difficulty came soon enough.

One of the boys emerged from the washroom, automatically bent over the drinking fountain in the hallway, straightened up, started to swallow—and suddenly realized he was going to Communion. He was tall for his age, and thin, with a proportionately long neck and prominent Adam's apple; and this physical appearance made both the humor and the pathos of his predicament extremely vivid. The water had already started its downward course when the neck muscles tightened and the Adam's apple rose valiantly, as if to close the gap. For a brief moment the lad appeared to be on the verge of apoplexy. The veins in his head and throat bulged; his eyes stared; the Adam's apple quivered. But it was only for a moment. The water had gone too far to be thwarted. The veins and muscles relaxed; the Adam's apple lost its hold; and the water slipped victoriously on its course. Crestfallen, the lad turned to me.

"What can I do about it?" he asked.

According to my scant knowledge, there was only one thing to be done about it: abstain from Communion. However, since I knew that priests sometimes have mysterious solutions for pitiable situations, I told the boy to consult one of the priests before the Mass started. I do not know what the priest told him, but I suppose he solved the case according to the principles contained in the following paragraphs.



### *Why the Fast?*

Many of the printed editions of the Code of Canon Law contain copious footnotes referring to the sources of various laws. The reader of one of these editions can tell immediately whether a law is new or old by this simple rule: if there are no footnotes, the law is new; if there are footnotes, the law is either wholly or partially an old one. The footnotes to canon 858, § 1, which contains the law about fasting before Communion, refer back to several pre-Code documents, the oldest of which is the Decree of Gratian.

Gratian was a Camaldolese monk who lived in the twelfth century and who set himself to the gigantic task of collecting and codifying the laws of the Church that were in existence at his time. He gives the law of fasting before Communion substantially as we have it today, and for his authority he cites St. Augustine. Augustine, in his turn, clearly testifies to the universality of this obligation in his time, and says that the custom of observing the fast arose in the primitive Church, even in apostolic times. The best historians can tell us little more than that. On the one hand, it is clear from the Scriptural account of the Last Supper that the Apostles were not fasting when they made their first Communion; and on the other hand the oldest documents available indicate that the custom of fasting before Communion arose very early and spread very rapidly. In the early fifteenth century the Council of Constance solemnly approved this long-standing custom as both reasonable and laudable.

Why the custom? Gratian says that it arose through a spirit of reverence toward the Blessed Sacrament. The fast recognizes the preeminence of the Blessed Sacrament over other foods by making the Eucharist the first nourishment of the day; and the slight self-denial involved helps to preserve a respectful attitude towards Holy Communion.

Negatively, of course, the total abstinence from food and drink removes even the slightest danger of irreverence that would come, for example, from overeating before Communion and especially from the use of intoxicants. Some authors on this subject add a further reason derived from symbolism: namely, the hunger and thirst of body signifies the soul-craving we should have for the Bread of Life.

### *Interpretation of the Law*

The law of fasting before Communion, as it applies generally, may be briefly stated thus: "No one may receive Holy Communion unless he has preserved the natural fast from midnight" (cf. canon 858, § 1). Brief though it is, and apparently clear, this law is not correctly understood without some knowledge of technicalities involved in the interpretation of the expressions, "midnight" and "the natural fast." These expressions do not explain themselves.

It seems advisable to preface my explanation of these terms with two preliminary remarks. The first is that the interpretation of any law that includes such elements as "time," "quantity," and "quality" almost inevitably involves subtle distinctions and technicalities. The law covers some cases, but it does not cover others; and it is the task of the canonist and moral theologian to try to distinguish these cases and to answer questions accordingly. In some instances they may apparently, or even actually, go too far in their refinement of the law; but such instances are rare. The distinctions, even the most subtle, almost always result from an attempt to give an objective, logical interpretation of the meaning and extent of the law.

My second preliminary remark concerns controversies. In their solutions of some cases the theologians disagree. Occasionally the Church authoritatively settles such dis-

agreements; but often enough she allows the controversy to remain, and in doing so she allows the faithful to follow the standard rules for "doubtful cases." In explaining the law of fasting before Communion, as well as the exemptions from the law, I am making allowance for all solidly probable opinions.

### *The Natural Fast*

The first expression that involves some difficulty in its interpretation is "the natural fast." In a broad, general way, the natural fast may be described as the complete abstinence from eating or drinking. Therefore the fast is broken by anything that may reasonably be called eating or drinking. The problem of the canonist and moralist is to determine what may be reasonably called eating or drinking; and the solution of this problem, simple though it appears to be, calls for some distinctions.

### *Digestibility*

Even the "ordinary man," the person who is in no way encumbered with theological knowledge, must see that some distinction is necessary in this matter. Common sense tells the ordinary man that when I put a spoonful of ice cream into my mouth and swallow it, I eat; and when I raise a glass of water to my lips and take a mouthful and deliberately swallow it, I drink. But what if I put a safety pin into my mouth and swallow it; or what if with the aid of a nose-dropper I introduce some liquid deep into the nasal passages? I think the common sense of the ordinary man would reply that I don't eat the safety pin and I don't drink the nose drops. Such extreme cases seem to be clear; and they show that even ordinary persons, without theological training, recognize that some things constitute eating and drinking, and some things do not; in other words, some things would break the fast and some would not.

It is one thing for the common man to see that distinc-

tions are necessary; it is quite another thing for him to formulate the principles underlying the distinctions. The formulation of these principles is the task of the theologian.

### *Digestible*

To put the matter simply and in terms of the examples already given, the theologian would notice one very fundamental difference between taking ice cream and swallowing a safety pin. The ice cream is digestible; the safety-pin is not (at least not ordinarily!) Digestibility seems to be the common denominator for all things that are considered to be food or drink; hence the first rule of the theologian for determining a violation of the fast is this: *To break the fast, one must take something digestible.*

In trying to determine what is and what is not digestible, theologians accommodate themselves more to what they call "the common estimate," than to the results of the chemical analysis. Following this common estimate, they usually say that the fast is not broken by such things as these: clay, chaff, paper, chalk, hair, fingernails, dandruff, bits of skin, thread, toothpicks, matchsticks, and so forth. Ridiculous though it may sound, this list is not merely the result of the fertile imagination of some armchair theologian. The list comprizes just the things that worrisome people are apt to ask about. For instance, they bite their finger nails, get a hair in their mouth, chew toothpicks and matchsticks, feel that lint from the blankets or towels has got into their mouth; and in some cases they swallow these various odds and ends. Then they hurry to the priest to find out if they have broken their fast. And the priest is able to tell them that their Communion fast is not broken precisely because he knows the first rule formulated by the experts; he knows that indigestible things do not break the fast, no matter when or how they are taken into the system.

### *Eating or Drinking*

One other distinction must be made, and we can illustrate this by referring back to the glass of water and the nose drops. Why is it that in the one case we say that a person drinks, and in the other case he does not drink? Both the water and the nose drops may be digestible, yet the water would violate the fast and the nose drops would not. Evidently, the rule of digestibility is not enough; hence the theologians formulate a second rule: *The fast can be broken only by an action that is reasonably termed eating or drinking.*

In this matter of eating and drinking, one thing is quite clear: the feat is accomplished by means of the mouth, and not by means of the nose or any other part of the body. Hence, hypodermic injections, intravenous feeding, the use of an enema, and all such things do not violate the fast.

It is also clear that to eat or drink one must swallow. Hence such things as brushing the teeth, gargling, rinsing the mouth, sucking blood from a cut finger and spitting it out, chewing blades of grass, and tasting food—if one has acquired the art of doing this last without swallowing—do not violate the fast. The same may certainly be said of chewing old gum.

It can easily happen that, after one of the actions just mentioned, a small amount of digestible substance will remain in the mouth and be swallowed. Theologians would not call this eating or drinking; they would say that the substance is swallowed "in the manner of saliva." All would condemn as useless and even pharisaical the practice of continually expectorating after brushing the teeth or rinsing the mouth. Even if a little of the substance were accidentally swallowed during the action (for example: while gargling, rinsing the mouth, or brushing the teeth),

it would not be called eating or drinking, and consequently it would not break the fast.

It is difficult to give an exact definition of this expression, "in the manner of saliva"; yet it certainly seems to voice a common-sense distinction, and it is used to solve a host of practical cases. By reason of this distinction, theologians would say that the swallowing of blood from an internal nosebleed, or from the lips or gums would not violate the fast. And the same solution is applicable if perspiration, tears, blood from an external nosebleed, or a few drops of water from a showerbath should accidentally trickle into the mouth and be swallowed. In none of these cases is the fast broken, because the slight quantity of digestible substance that is transferred to the stomach is taken, not as eating or drinking, but "in the manner of saliva."

Suppose you were in a storm and you accidentally swallowed a snowflake or a rain-drop—would the fast be broken? "No," say the experts. Such things might also be said to be swallowed as part of the saliva; but generally theologians apply a special distinction. They say that these things are taken "in the process of breathing." For the same reason, the swallowing of gnats that occasionally find their way into an open mouth would not interfere with the fast.

Smoke, of course, is not food; but even if it were smoking would not violate the fast, because it is not eating or drinking. The use of a throat spray or an inhalator cannot reasonably be called eating or drinking; hence such things are permissible before Communion. There has been some controversy over the question of flushing the stomach by means of a stomach pump, but it is solidly probable that the fast is not broken, even though some of the liquid would remain in the stomach and some of the lubricant from the tube would adhere to the oesophagus. Doctors and nurses may safely follow this opinion.

By way of summarizing this section, let me again indicate the two important rules formulated by the experts. The fast is not broken unless one takes (1) *something digestible*, (2) *by means of an action that may reasonably be called eating or drinking*. And, of course, the obligation to fast does not begin until midnight.

### *When is Midnight?*

If you were spending Christmas Eve beside the telephone in a parish rectory you would probably experience an urge to impatience at about the sixth repetition of the question, "When does the midnight Mass begin?" Very likely the inquirers really want to know when the church doors will open or when the singing will begin; but as it is phrased the question certainly sounds ridiculous.

The simpler question, "When is midnight?" may sound even more ridiculous. Yet, in a discussion of the fast before Communion this question is quite reasonable, because the Church allows the communicant to follow the most favorable of several different methods of calculating time: true local time, mean local time, regional legal time, and extraordinary legal time. It is not my purpose to explain these various methods of computing time; yet I must say something on the subject, at least by way of brief mention and exemplification.

No doubt we all remember the days before the war, when winter breakfasts were not always taken in the dead of night. Our pre-war standard time (which, for convenience' sake, I shall simply designate as Standard time) is a good example of what the Code calls *regional legal time*. It is *regional* because all the places in a specified region use a common time; it is *legal* because adopted by law.

Standard time is a "mean" time, because it provides for a uniform solar day of twenty-four hours; it is a "zone"



time because it provides for the division of the earth into twenty-four zones, each corresponding to one of the hours. In the United States we have four zones of Standard time: Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific. The common time of each of the zones is the mean solar time of the central meridian of the zone. For public purposes this use of a common time is very convenient; but this should not cause us to lose sight of the fact that each of the places within the zones has its own mean solar time. The Code takes account of these local differences by allowing for what is called *mean local time*.

For example: Palmyra, Illinois; Kansas City, Missouri; and Chicago, Illinois, are all in the Central time zone. Palmyra is on the 90th meridian, which is the central meridian of the zone; Chicago is two degrees east of this meridian; and Kansas City is four and one half degrees west. At midnight by Central Standard time, the mean local time of the three places would read as follows: Chicago, 12.08 a. m.; Palmyra, 12.00; and Kansas City, 11.42 p.m.

Standard time and mean local time are both computed on a 24-hour day basis. Actually, however, the sun does not keep to that basis; the length of the day according to the sun increases and decreases throughout the year. Any man who knows his sundials can tell you that. The sundial, if it is accurate, will give you the exact time by the sun at the place where you measure it. In the language of the Code, this is *true local time*.

Suppose we illustrate the bearing of these various time computations on the Eucharistic fast, by imagining we are in Kansas City, Missouri, before the war. When it is midnight by clock time—that is, by Central Standard time—it is only 11.42 by the mean local time. This difference is constant all through the year; hence the communicant in Kansas City may always wait till 12.18 Standard time to



begin his fast. On certain days of the year true sun time will confer a still further advantage: for example at about the middle of February, when it is midnight by Standard time it is only 11.28 by true sun time. A communicant who knows of this difference may wait till 12.32 a.m. to begin his fast.

All this was before the war. We now follow War time, which, in the terminology of canon law, is *extraordinary legal time*. (Daylight-saving time is another example of such time.) While this extraordinary time is in use, the communicant in Kansas City may always wait until 1.18 a.m. by War time to begin his fast; and on certain days, when the true sun time favors him, he may wait still longer: for instance, near the middle of February he need not begin his fast till 1.32 a.m., War Time.

I trust that I have sufficiently illustrated the various calculations of time permitted by canon law. A sundial does not help much at midnight (even if one has a sundial); hence true sun time could be used only by those who have a table of variations or a clock set according to the sundial. This seems to reserve the use of true sun time to the comparative few. On the other hand, wherever War time is in use, communicants may wait until 1 a.m. by the clock before beginning their fast, because this would be midnight by Standard time.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, in many places (for example, Washington, Detroit, San Francisco) mean local time would confer a further advantage. The mean local time can be ascertained from some almanacs or, perhaps more simply, from the local weather bureau.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Readers will find a brief discussion of the controversy concerning the use of Standard time during the war in this REVIEW, Vol. III, pp. 213-214.

<sup>2</sup>A simple rule that individuals can apply for themselves is the following. Find your own locality on a map. If you are east of the central meridian of your zone, you cannot benefit by the use of mean local time. But each degree west of the central meridian makes your local midnight four minutes later than midnight by Standard time. Maybe this isn't so simple after all!

In beginning his Eucharistic fast according to the time most favorable to him the communicant is not "cheating" the law. He is as much within the law as the person who voluntarily follows a less favorable time. Certainly it is reasonable that those who are obliged to keep the law should know the extent of their obligation; and in some cases (for example, Sisters and Brothers on night duty in hospitals) this knowledge can be the source of great good.

### *Eating after Midnight*

It is one thing to determine how to calculate midnight; it is yet another thing to discern when one eats *after* midnight. Before leaving the subject of midnight, it may be well to consider the ordinary "before or after" questions.

If you are teaching the Eucharistic fast to an inquisitive class, you are almost sure to have one hand raised with the question: "What if I eat a late supper, and bits of food stay in my teeth, and I swallow these in the morning?" Most of the experts answer that question by saying that such things really belong to the previous night's repast, and they do not break the fast, even if swallowed in the morning.

Another hand: "What if I just get a bite of sandwich into my mouth and the clock points to the latest time for figuring midnight?" Again the experts give a benign answer: the bite may be finished; it need not be removed from the mouth. The reason for the answer seems to be a combination of good etiquette and good sense.

A third hand is waving. From its tantalizing motions it is clear that the owner has a *deep* question. And he has.

"What about coughdrops and hard candy?" he asks, with the air of one who knows he has you in the corner.

I am always tempted to dodge this question with the old bromide, "Well, what about them!" The question dis-

tresses me. And I think it has sufficiently distressed many authors to have them omit it from their books.

If a coughdrop or a piece of hard candy has been put into the mouth at a time when it would normally be dissolved and swallowed before midnight, the case presents no difficulty, even though a small amount of the substance should remain in the mouth and be consumed after midnight. This would be equivalent to the swallowing of the remnants of food left in the mouth after the evening meal.

But the case is somewhat different when the coughdrop or hard candy is put into the mouth just before midnight and then slowly consumed after midnight. Theologians who treat this matter in their books say that the fast would be broken. They would not consider this as the equivalent of finishing the bite of sandwich, because the bite of sandwich is eaten quickly, whereas it is of the nature of hard substances to be eaten, as they say, "continuously." It seems, therefore, that these authorities would demand that the offending morsel should either be politely removed from the mouth or quickly chewed up and swallowed, like the bite of sandwich.

That is, as far as I know, all that has been written about the coughdrop case. It is the only solution given in the books, yet it is not perfectly clear that it has the force of a "common opinion"; and I know a few moralists who are inclined to apply this simple rule to all cases: what is put into the mouth before midnight does not break the fast.

One final question concerning midnight: "When does the fast begin if one is going to Communion at the midnight Mass?" According to canon law, the fast begins at midnight. It is sometimes recommended that communicants fast for several hours before midnight, but there is no universal law to this effect.

### Exemptions

The Church considers the law of fasting before Communion to be of considerable importance. One who is certain that he has broken the fast is obliged under pain of mortal sin to abstain from Communion unless for some special reason he is exempted from the law. And this obligation is present even though the fast was violated *inadvertently*: for example, by taking a glass of water without realizing that it was already past midnight. However, important though it is, the law does admit of exceptions; and it will be well for us to consider these briefly.

The canon law itself contains three exemptions from the law of fasting before Communion. The first of these exceptions (c. 858, § 1) is made in favor of those who are in danger of death. Primarily, of course, this exception is for those who are dangerously ill. The approved practice of the Church is to anoint such people and give them Viaticum. They need not be fasting when they receive Viaticum, and as long as the danger lasts they may receive Viaticum daily, without fasting. Even if they are able to preserve the fast, they are not obliged to do so. This distinction is rather theoretical in the case of good Catholics; they prefer to fast if they can do so. In fact, they are apt to carry this reverence to extremes. I recall the case of a priest whose mother had been a daily communicant for years. During her last illness she found it impossible to fast till a late hour, and on the other hand she did not wish to have the household disturbed every day at an early hour. Hence she compromised by asking him to bring her Communion only on certain occasions. He had a better idea—so he thought.

"Why don't you take your breakfast at the regular time? Then I can bring you Communion later in the morning, and you can keep on receiving every day."

She looked at him with a sort of pained surprise.

"I know you must be right, John," she finally replied. "But I couldn't do it. Mama taught us differently."

Viaticum is not like Extreme Unction. The latter can be conferred only on those who are dangerously ill; the danger of death must come from sickness. Not so, in the case of Viaticum. Everyone who is in danger of death from any source whatsoever (for example: an air raid, shipwreck, battle) is allowed (and perhaps obliged) to receive Viaticum; and whenever he receives Viaticum he is not strictly obliged to preserve the Eucharistic fast.

The second exception contained in the Code (c. 858, § 1) refers to the case in which the Blessed Sacrament is in danger of profanation. It is hardly necessary for the Church to mention this. The very law of reverence toward the Blessed Sacrament tells us that it should be guarded against desecration by wicked men and that in this case the hosts could (and should) be consumed by the faithful, even though they had just eaten a full meal.

The second part of canon 858 contains a limited dispensation from the Eucharistic fast for the sick who have been confined to their beds or their rooms for approximately a month, even though they are not in danger of death. Since a former issue of the REVIEW (May, 1944, p. 171) presented a detailed commentary on this privilege, I will merely summarize it here. The canon allows the sick who have been so confined, and who are not expected to recover within a few days, to receive Communion once or twice a week after having taken medicine in solid or liquid form, and food in some liquid form.

The foregoing are the only exceptions to the law provided for by the Code. The Church provides for other special cases by dispensing from the law, either directly, or through the ministry of certain prelates or priests. For example, the Local Ordinaries in certain missionary terri-

tories, and military chaplains, for the duration of the war, enjoy rather wide powers. Then there are the other war-time concessions: the first concerning those who are engaged in works of national defense and must work after midnight; and the second granted to the priest who says the evening Mass for the soldiers and to all military communicants.<sup>3</sup> These are examples of some of the concessions that have been made. In general, it seems that wider dispensations have been granted in the last decade than ever before in the history of the Eucharistic fast.

Ordinarily, individual dispensations from the fast must be petitioned from the Holy See. The laity are to seek such a dispensation through their own bishop; and religious seek it either through their own major superior or through the bishop.

It can happen that even without a dispensation one may legitimately receive Holy Communion after having broken the fast. Such cases are rare, however; and the reasons for the exceptions would have to be quite serious, according to the long-standing and common interpretation of the law. One example frequently given is that of the communicant who has already knelt at the altar rail when he realizes that he is not fasting and feels that he could not return without being suspected of having done something wrong. Another example is that of the person in authority who could not abstain from Communion on a certain day without the danger of giving bad example. And a third case, instanced by some reputable authors, is that of the child who has inadvertently broken the fast on the day of his solemn First Communion. Personally, I doubt if the conditions for the

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<sup>3</sup>The terms of the privilege granted to the Bishops of the United States in favor of defense-workers are given in this REVIEW, Vol. I, P. 143. The privilege concerning the evening Mass for military personnel is explained in the same volume, pp. 359-360.

first two cases would often be verified; but certainly the principle on which they rest is a very sound one: namely, that the communicant's right to his reputation or his obligation to avoid scandal prevails over the law of fasting before Communion. The third case is solved on what is termed *epikeia*: namely, by interpreting "the mind of the legislator," and concluding that he would not wish to urge the law in such a case. The difficulty in this third case might be the very practical one of explaining to the child that his case is entirely exceptional and that on other days, if he broke the fast, he should not go to Communion. I might add that, because of this same difficulty of explaining the matter, it might be imprudent to speak of this case in a class of small children.

### *Doubts*

I can hardly conclude this article without saying something about doubts. It is a solidly probable opinion, and one rather widely accepted today, that no one need abstain from Communion unless he is certain he has broken the fast. Therefore, in the case of a sincere doubt about any one of the conditions for breaking the fast, one could legitimately receive Holy Communion. This, of course, presupposes that reasonable means are taken to solve the doubt: for example, if one wakes up at night, takes a drink, and then begins to wonder if it is after midnight, he should find out what time it is, if he can conveniently do so.

By this time, I believe that all the questions at the beginning of this article are answered—at least, more or less. It remains for me merely to propose a question: what would *you* have told that boy if you had been the priest he consulted on the morning of the general Communion for his deceased comrade?



## *Decisions of the Holy See*

**November 3, 1921:** *Text of an Instruction on the Second Year of Novitiate* (issued by the Sacred Congregation of Religious)<sup>1</sup>:

There are a number of religious institutes whose constitutions prescribe a second year of novitiate and permit superiors to employ the novices in the works of the institute during that time. Lest the religious formation of the novices suffer from this practice and to ward off abuses which might arise, this Sacred Congregation, taking advantage of the revision of the constitutions of the various religious institutes according to the Code, made a careful study of the subject and at the plenary session of June 17, 1921, after considering all the circumstances, delivered an opinion thereon which was reported to His Holiness, Benedict XV, in an audience on June 25, 1921.

His Holiness approved the opinion and ordered that an Instruction be issued which all religious congregations whose constitutions prescribe a second year of novitiate should be bound to observe in its entirety.

I. Whenever the constitutions prescribe a second year of novitiate and allow the novices to be employed in the works proper to the institute during it, this may be permitted, provided that the fundamental laws of the novitiate are safeguarded. It must always be kept in mind, therefore, that the novitiate is instituted to train the souls of the novices in those things which pertain to the uprooting of vices, to the restraining of the passions, to the acquirement of virtues, and to a knowledge of regular life through the study of the constitutions. The purpose of all this is that the novices may learn to strive after Christian perfection by the profession of the evangelical counsels and the vows, in which striving the end of every religious precisely consists. And it is quite right that a novitiate of more than one year be prescribed in some institutes, especially among those whose members are employed in external works, since they, distracted by various cares and more exposed to the dangers of the world, need a more firm and solid spiritual foundation. Hence this Sacred Congregation orders that even during the second year of novitiate the discipline of the spir-

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<sup>1</sup>See the commentary on the Instruction on pp. 73-82 of this number of REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS.



itual life be especially taken care of in preference to any other duties whatsoever.

II. It is permitted, however, that the novice (male or female) be employed in the works of the institute during the second year, if the constitutions allow it. This must be done, however, with prudence and moderation, and only for the purpose of training the novices. Nor may novices ever be so employed in these works that they perform them alone (for example, taking the place of absent teachers or instructors, or ministering to the sick in hospitals); but they must be engaged in such work under the direction and supervision of a mature religious who should instruct them by word and example.

III. If it is ever permitted by the constitutions that a novice be sent out of the novitiate house to do the work of the institute during the second year, this should be only by way of exception and only when some grave reason requires it. This reason should have reference to the novice: for example, because he or she cannot be adequately trained in the house, or because he or she for some other reason cannot remain there. But the necessity or the advantage of the religious institute itself may never under any pretext be considered a sufficient cause: as, for example, if the novices were to be substituted for the regular members in the work of the institute because of the lack of religious.

IV. Two months before their profession of vows, whether they have remained in the novitiate house or out of it, the novices shall abstain from all external work. If they have been out of the novitiate, let them be recalled. During the entire two months before their profession let them prepare themselves for it by strengthening themselves in the spirit of their vocation.

V. In an audience granted to the Reverend Abbot Secretary on November 3, 1921, His Holiness, Pope Benedict XV, approved the contents of this Instruction and ordered that it be observed by all.

Given at Rome from the Secretariate of the Sacred Congregation of Religious on the date mentioned above.

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A correction. On page 48 of the January number of REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS the indulgence granted for the aspiration "Thy will be done" should read "500 days each time" instead of "50 days each time."

## Book Reviews

**THE MAN NEAREST TO CHRIST.** By F. L. Filas, S.J. Pp. 217. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1944. \$2.50.

St. Joseph is such a familiar figure in the early history of our Lord that we think we know a great deal about him until we start to examine the records. Then we learn to our surprise that not a single utterance of his has been preserved for us, and that all he did is enshrined in four short episodes of the story of Christ's infancy. Does Catholic tradition supply further details about the life and person of the man nearest to Christ? What sources of tradition shall we examine? What confidence can we place in these sources? What statements are made in them about St. Joseph, and have they been accepted as facts in the past?

The present book satisfies our curiosity on these and many other points. Every known fact, or statement which lays claim to be a fact, or which was accepted as a fact in the past, is carefully considered, its source indicated, its probability accepted or rejected. From this study St. Joseph emerges in a clear perspective, freed from all the vagueness of fiction and the uncertainty of pious speculation. The author shows us the real St. Joseph, standing firmly on the rock foundation of the inspired word.

The second part of the book is no less interesting than the first. It traces every noteworthy step in the development of the devotion to the saint. Reasons are assigned why public recognition was so tardily accorded to him in the liturgy of the Western Church. His feast was celebrated at a comparatively early date in the Eastern Church, but not until the latter part of the fifteenth century was the feast introduced at Rome, and only in the seventeenth century was it made a feast for the Universal Church. During this past century, however, the devotion to St. Joseph has had a phenomenal growth, and every Sovereign Pontiff since Pius IX has had a share in spreading this devotion.

The author concludes his work with a translation of the recent papal documents concerning St. Joseph. In these he is designated as the patron of the Universal Church, as the perfect model for fathers of families, as the special protector of the working-classes, as patron of the dying, and finally as special intercessor in the struggle against

atheistic communism. To his watchful care God entrusted what was dearest to Him on earth, and he fulfilled the office of provider and protector of the Holy Family with great solicitude, toiled unceasingly day by day, and rescued the Christ Child from imminent danger. For these reasons he has been chosen to protect Christ's Church, inspire the heads of families, console the toiler, strengthen the dying, and ward off the perils which threaten modern society. The author proves satisfactorily that St. Joseph is eminently the Saint of present day needs, and that we shall do well to look to him for comfort and strength.—H. WILLMERING, S.J.

**A HEROINE OF THE MISSION FIELD.** By Dom Romanus Rios, O.S.B.  
Pp. vii + 130. George Gill and Sons, Ltd., London, 1944. \$1.00.

A book of interest especially for religious is Dom Romanus' story of the life of Mother Mary of the Heart of Jesus (Euphrasie Barbier), foundress of the Institute of Our Lady of the Missions. The author's terse style is well suited to the writing of modern religious biography, reverent but exact and historically correct. In reading the little book one comes to appreciate the author's statement that tiny Mother Mary of the Heart of Jesus was of giant spiritual stature.

The histories of the early days of religious orders are often stories of almost unbelievable difficulties, illustrating the devious ways of Divine Providence, but this one is more than ordinarily inspiring, telling as it does of Mother Mary's indomitable courage through the days of trial and misunderstanding. At times, the Foundress had no idea of what was to happen to her next; she even wondered once which Order she really belonged to. Out of it all came the new foundation, the *Institut de Notre-Dame des Missions*, which, in spite of its French title, is a community working chiefly in English-speaking countries, the British Isles, New Zealand, Australia and Canada. They have only three houses in France, several in India and Indo-China. Nearly all of the establishments were made by Mother Mary herself—a little woman who loved her native France and had a particular dread of ever having to work among the English!

Mother Mary's work endures and prospers. The story of her life deserves to be better known, and Dom Romanus' book will no doubt set the pace for bigger, more detailed biographies.

—C. A. CHAPMAN, S.J.

**INTRODUCTIO IN CODICEM** quam . . . paravit et edidit Adm. R. P. Udalricus Beste, O.S.B., I.C.D. Pp. 1000. St. John's Abbey Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, editio altera, 1944. \$7.65.

This is a book for priests and seminarians. The second edition differs little from the first, published in 1938, except for some corrections in the text and the addition of some recent decisions and decrees of the Holy See. In a single large volume the author treats the entire Code of Canon Law with brief but satisfactory comments on the individual canons. A special feature of the book lies in the frequent references to particular problems and conditions as they exist in the Church in the United States, as well as to the particular legislation of the Plenary Councils of Baltimore, in so far as this is still in force after the Code.—A. C. ELLIS, S.J.

**A PREFACE TO NEWMAN'S THEOLOGY.** By the Reverend Edmund Darvil Benard. Pp. xvi + 234. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1944. \$2.25

The centenary of Newman's conversion this year is also the centenary of his great theological work, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, which terminated the intellectual process bringing Newman into the Church and hit directly into the theological question which was springing into life in Newman's time and which remains today one of the liveliest wave fronts of theological study. Done by a member of the theological faculty of the Catholic University of America, the present work is concerned mostly with this *Essay* and with Newman's later related book, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*.

This is truly a preface. Father Benard lays out the elements in Newman's explanations of dogmatic development and of the approach to faith, the criticisms offered of these explanations, and his own evaluations. His patience with his material should make his book of use even to the non-theological student seriously interested in the preambles of faith and in the way in which the original deposit of faith left to the Church at the time of the Apostles has manifested itself in the later definitions of popes and councils. The book particularly clears the way for those whose suspicions of the great cardinal's theological orthodoxy still hinder their understanding of his thought.

In the bibliography appended to this work one relevant item is omitted: an article, "The Newman-Perrone Paper on Development,"

edited by the Rev. T. Lynch in the *Gregorianum*, XVI (1935), 420ff., which reproduces the Latin summary of his notions on development of doctrine submitted by Newman himself to the Italian Jesuit theologian Perrone, together with Father Perrone's annotations. In Perrone Newman found one of the first champions at Rome of his theological views. Today the *Essay on Development* is used as a textbook at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

—W. J. ONG, S.J.

**WAR IS MY PARISH.** By Dorothy Fremont Grant. Pp. xvi + 184. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1944. \$2.25.

Here is a composite news-reel of the Catholic Chaplain of World War II. There may not be much here that you could not have read piecemeal in your diocesan weekly newspaper. Mrs. Grant (*What Other Answer?*) admittedly borrows freely. What is original is her idea of editing in sequence these fascinating anecdotes of priests in khaki and in blue.

The introductory historical chapter neatly summarizes the part played by Catholic Chaplains in all of America's wars. The multitude of acknowledgements leads the reader to suspect that all the editors of the Catholic Press were behind Mrs. Grant in an effort permanently to bequeath "something for the record." Although the book is slender, the eight splendid photographs alone are almost worth the price.

Some of the selections are about Chaplains, others by Chaplains. No Service is omitted: we read about pastors of the aviators, the sea-bees, the marine raiders, the paratroopers, the merchant mariners. and of every group in uniform. The parishioners' stories, you may be sure, abound in pathos, heroism, humor, and simple piety.

"Upon a Midnight Clear," written by Jim in the South Pacific. December 26th, to Mary in the States, will win itself a place among the finest Christmas stories you know. Personally, nothing was more grippingly and beautifully symbolic than the picture of the Chaplain at work as painted by Paratrooper Sam, ("Bread from Heaven," p. 132):

Dear Mom:

. . . When the big moment comes, and we jump somewhere else besides somewhere in England like we do now, the padre will be along. We will be weighted down with more junk than you have stowed away in the attic, but not the padre. But he will have What Counts! He will carry the Blessed Sacrament. Down from the skies will come us, Mom, and floating along with us our Chaplain and Christ.

Our Lord, Himself. 'Member about the Living Bread comes down from Heaven? We'll be coming with It. Now, Mom, get wise and lay off your worrying. What can happen to us?

Please send some decent tasting toothpaste in your next package.

Your loving son,  
Sam.

For religious there is an especially important observation in the words of Chaplain L. R. Schmieder, U.S.N.:

The missionary and the Chaplain in combat zones make wonderful meditations. They have nothing but eternity in prospect for them and that perhaps on the double. It is surprising how much better one can meditate when one realizes that the end of our mortal life may be very near. Going through one or more of these experiences leaves an indelible imprint on the mind and heart. We realize (in this very personal way) that we have 'here no lasting city but seek one that is above.' I have always admired a missionary and a military Chaplain going out for his second 'hitch' in the 'combat zones.' They realize very vividly what the thoughts and feelings of Our Lord were as he set out for Jerusalem the last time—for His Passion and Death.

*War Is My Parish* will make sure-fire refectory reading. The rapid, thrilling stories in capsule form would be welcome, too, for friends in the hospital. Finally, it is difficult to think of a less offensive Catholic book that could be given to a non-Catholic friend in whom you have some hopes of implanting the Faith.

—W. F. KELLEY, S.J.

**SECRETS OF THE SAINTS.** By Henri Ghéon. Pp. 406. Sheed and Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue, New York, 1944. \$3.00.

Too often we think of a saint as a lily-loving, long-robed, golden-crowned medieval superman; a queer, quiet, heavenly non-touchable, full of prayers and out-size devotions. As Ghéon himself says in the introduction to one of his plays, "We moderns still pray to the Saints, but we scarcely ever associate with them any more, and we no longer really know them, as we should know our friends . . . And even when we know Our Saints, we do not allow them to follow us outside the church. We wish to associate only with men. We forget that they were men, models of what men should be, *complete men*."

Ghéon's achievement in the four lives presented now in a single volume is precisely this: he has recorded not only the marvelous sanctity of Margaret Mary, Thérèse, John Bosco, and the Curé d'Ars, but he has preserved intact their humanity. "Of all great hearts," he says, "the greatest is still the heart of a Saint. For it wants to contain not

only its neighbor, strangers, all suffering, sinful, warring humanity—but God Himself."

John Bosco's life is the exciting struggle to win over the "dead-end kids" of Turin—a Saint's dynamic solution to the juvenile delinquency problem of his day. No less exciting is the Curé d'Ars' struggle with a belligerent devil. On the quieter side, but even, perhaps, more impressive because of his unusual psychological penetration, are Ghéon's lives of the Little Flower and Margaret Mary.

Monsieur Ghéon has captured, as no other modern biographer, the inner warmth and beauty of sainthood. His *Secrets of the Saints* stands alone.—JOHN J. WALSH, S.J.

**OUR LADY OF FATIMA.** By the Most Reverend Finbar Ryan, O.P.  
Pp. 236. The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Maryland, 1944.  
\$1.25 (paper).

This book was first published in 1939; the present volume is the first American edition. As he says in his acknowledgement, Archbishop Ryan borrowed generously from other accounts, particularly those in Portuguese. The result is an extremely informative book telling us something of the historical background of Portugal; of the name, "Fatima," and of other names associated with the apparitions; of the lives of the three children before and after the apparitions; of the ecclesiastical investigations in Portugal and of the final approval by the hierarchy; of the rapid growth of the devotion, once it had been approved; and so forth. In an appendix, the Very Reverend Paul O'Sullivan, O.P., tells of the Silver Jubilee celebration in 1942.

We should all like to know whether, among the many messages Our Lady gave the three children, there may be one that should be called *the* message of Fatima. For Archbishop Ryan this message seems to be, "Say the Rosary frequently, daily!" Others find in Fatima a parallel to Paray la Monial; and they say that, as at Paray the message was devotion to the Sacred Heart to be manifested by reparation and consecration, so the message of Fatima is devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to be manifested likewise by reparation and consecration. There is no contradiction between these authors and Archbishop Ryan; it is simply a matter of emphasis.

—G. KELLY, S.J.

## Communications

[NOTE: Several months ago we asked for suggestions concerning topics for discussion in our *Communications* department. We received a variety of suggestions, and we are printing all of them in this number. If one of these topics interests you and you have an idea concerning it that you wish to pass on to the other readers of the REVIEW, or if there is another subject that you consider of greater importance, please write to us.

Communications need not be anonymous; but, if you wish your name printed, please state that explicitly. The mere signing of your name is not sufficient guarantee to us that you will not object to the use of the name. We think that many communications would gain in value if the authors' names were printed.

Whenever possible, communications should be neatly typed; and they should be as brief as the subject-matter will permit. We reserve the right to digest them if we judge them too long. And of course, we assume no responsibility other than that of general censorship for the opinions expressed in communications—THE EDITORS]

Reverend Fathers:

It seems to me that a very necessary and interesting topic for congregations of women would be "Canon Law for Religious." And this in spite of the fact that many helpful books on this matter are available. I give this opinion because of the number of Superiors and Councillors who have spoken of their perplexities with regard to points of canon law concerning religious life.

It is possible that an insufficient knowledge of the laws of the Church governing religious communities explains the slight importance sometimes attached to their observance. An experienced retreat master was once heard to express the opinion that "women religious" very often attached more importance to the praiseworthy customs of their congregation than to the requirements of canon law.

An interested Sister.

Reverend Fathers:

The suggestion I have to make involves the education and training of religious—Brothers and Sisters. Many educators today feel that our educational system in general has failed in certain areas. As Catholics we are more slow to admit defects in our system. We are slow to accept criticism. Yet, some feel that there are defects in our system.

Our young men and women entering religious houses of studies are products of the educational system as it has been during the imme-



diate past—whether private or public. They reflect the thinking of public and parochial schools and very often parochial schools are accused of imitating public schools.

What the future of education holds we are not certain as we are undoubtedly in a transitional stage. But we can give the thing direction through the education and training we give young men and women aspiring to the religious life. They are the ones that will be going out into the schools in the near future.

Whether or not changes are to be effected or desired is not the point. A discussion of the matter in your columns would be helpful in that all of us could give it some constructive thought.

A Brother

Reverend Fathers:

I should like to suggest a discussion of self-deceit among religious, who are bound to strive after perfection. I think we are all more or less addicted to it. I have been a superior for over thirty years; and I have met a number of souls who meant very well and thought they were very good, yet were blind to such faults as jealousy, the seeking of praise, the neglect of silence, and so forth. It was impossible to convince them of these things; in fact, one scarcely dared to tell them their shortcomings. What is the cause of this blindness? How can we be assured that we ourselves do not belong to this class?

A Sister Superior

Reverend Fathers:

Here are several suggested topics for discussion:

1) Nationalism (patriotism) in a religious community. Some good hints on this subject are found in *Directions for Novitiates of the Congregation of the Holy Cross*, which you reviewed recently.

2) Recreation and community life. What about the radio, for instance?

3) Manual labor in the community for the community.

4) Religious and the daily papers and secular magazines. I don't mean professional magazines, but such periodicals as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Liberty*, *Time*, *Life*, and so forth. What about reading such magazines? Is it allowed to order them for the community?

A Priest

Reverend Fathers:

"Are we really getting worldly?"—I think that would be a good topic for discussion. We are often told, especially by retreat masters, and sometimes by superiors, that we religious of today are getting very worldly. Maybe it would be well to discuss it among ourselves. Are we or aren't we? If we are getting worldly, what causes it: our work? our reading? the radio?—and so forth.

A Priest

Reverend Fathers:

One afternoon a boy stopped at a convent and asked to see a certain Sister. He said the matter was very urgent. But he was told that the Sister was at prayers, and that he could not see her. Four days later his body was found in the river, just outside the city. He had got into trouble, had come to see the "one person who could have helped him," and then, because he could not get help, he had committed suicide.

I have outlined this story, not to be critical, but because I think it introduces a problem worthy of discussion. The superior's attitude in the case outlined was that the Sister should not get upset, as the boy should have gone to a priest. Yet I wonder if there are not some cases that the priest cannot handle until a Sister has in some way acted as an intermediary. I know that we nuns sometimes sadly overstep our bounds, and that priests resent this; but I think it is much better to try do something, and go a little too far, than not to try at all.

Am I too modernistic and secular-accommodating in my views? Have I the present-day tendency of putting politeness in place of charity? Am I placing love of neighbor over love of God? Am I trying to substitute advice for prayer? On my scale of visits, is the balance upset between those to the parlor and those to the Blessed Sacrament?

We are told that we lose out in vocations because we do not keep in contact with our eighth grade graduates, and I believe it is a point. But "keeping in contact," I think, means an occasional visit, and their time cannot always coincide with our time. A girl on her way home from work some afternoon has a few extra moments and goes several blocks out of her way to stop at the convent to see a Sister, and when she gets there, not even in the door, she is told that Sister is at prayers and can't be disturbed. I doubt if she'll bother going out of her way again. I also doubt if her opinion of the Sister's

"prayerful life" is any more exalted.

I know that there are many times when visits are unnecessary and even undesired, but shouldn't this be known for certain before the person is turned away?

I wonder if we religious exercise the letter rather than the spirit. I wonder if there isn't too much formalism about our lives. I wonder if in the effort to preserve our respect and dignity resulting from God's special love, we are rather breaking down that respect and dignity and possibly wounding that special love?

A Sister

Reverend Fathers:

I suggest a discussion on motion pictures for religious in the auditoriums of monasteries and convents. It is a real problem for many superiors. What to do—pro and con?

A Priest

Reverend Fathers:

I think that, as Catholic teachers, we should be deeply and vitally interested in the racial question—for example, in the remedies for racial prejudice. Let us be honest and sincere in discussing this very important question.

A Sister

Reverend Fathers:

I have thought that possibly "Movies for religious" would be a fit subject for discussion. My opinion is that pictures such as "Going My Way," "The Song of Bernadette," "Madame Curie," and "The Sullivans," which we have recently seen, have tended only to benefit. But there are others not of such an educational or inspirational nature, and these I consider merely a waste of time.

A Sister

Reverend Fathers:

I should like to see a discussion of the place of the religious Brother in Catholic education. I know that this topic was touched on in your discussion of vocations; but it seems to me that, even in the minds of priests and Sisters, the Brother is too often the "forgotten man." Is this merely a subjective impression?

A Brother

**Reverend Fathers:**

Public relations is the 20th century name for the fully developed and re-christened virtue that must have first been practised by Adam and Eve—good example.

In the Christian era, our Lord sanctified the virtue by being the perfect public relations officer for His own little group. In this regard as in all others, He practised what he preached. "So let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:16).

Every word, deed or situation which influences people is somebody's public relations problem. For religious, we can define the public relations of a religious community as all the impressions made by that community or by the people connected with it. The speech, personal appearance, conduct and writings of any person connected with a religious community contribute to the general impression of the institution. The work of public relations, then, is a planned and organized effort first of all to avoid and correct misunderstandings, but most of all to win friends for your institution and to influence them to speak and act for your good.

The obligation of preserving and increasing the good reputation of a religious institution extends from the highest superior to the lowliest subject. Even the sick Sister who sees no other lay person but the doctor, and him only once a week, can do her part or fail in it.

For religious, besides the good impression that a virtuous life makes on all who see our good works, there must be something else added, and that is the spirit of public service—an eagerness to do our part for the rest of the Mystical Body. Even though very frequently there are circumstances which prevent us from helping someone in need, we dare not smother the inner virtue of an ever-present eagerness to serve. And interceding with others and with God are always at our disposal.

How can we put theory into practice? Just for one example: many—should I say, all?—religious communities are crying for new novices. If these religious got down to serious business and supplemented their prayers with a good public relations program, their novice-hunting problem would be at least partially solved.

In our ordinary daily round of work we can be either good or bad public relations agents. If a religious is so boorish or so eccentric as to refuse to greet students or to respond to their greetings on

the campus, the bad impression made by this one religious is enough to make the students think that the whole religious community is slightly touched—to allow such boorishness to persist. If you are the purchasing agent for your community, be pleasant but business-like in your dealings with salesmen. The religious who without good reason refused as many as eight times even to see a well-mannered elderly salesman representing a reliable food company left a very bad impression.

Many of the impressions that religious make on people who deal with them are more far-reaching than most religious would dare to suspect. The failure of many a project undertaken by a community may be attributed to the poor judgment of one religious on a question that comes within the scope of public relations. The serious consequences of the neglect of a planned public relations program have awakened many superiors, and as a result committees and directors of public relations have been established in many Catholic colleges. They find that the scope of their program is almost limitless. Recommendations of these committees affect: the daily conduct of students and professors, salary scales of employees, newspaper publicity, relations between the school and parents of the students, policies for soliciting donations, and so forth.

So important has public relations become to the business world that certain industries have established public relations offices throughout the country to protect the interests of their respective industries. The public relations offices of the liquor business, for instance, are credited with the closing of more taverns than all other public or private agencies combined. And the Public Relations Institute of New York City conducts surveys on a commercial basis to help solve public relations problems for all types of profit and non-profit institutions.

Shall we allow the children of this world to continue to be wiser in their generation than the children of light? (Luke 16:8).

A Priest

## Questions and Answers

—8—

Is there any limit to the *number of times* a novice may be absent during the canonical year? In other words, may a novice be absent six or seven times without breaking the canonical year of novitiate, provided the total number of days of absence does not exceed thirty?

There is no limit to the number of times a novice may be absent during the canonical year, provided that the total number of days of absence, whether continuous or not, does not *exceed thirty days* (c. 556). One must remember, however, that if the total number of days of absence is *more than fifteen*, these must be made up before the novice can make a *valid* profession of vows (c. 556, § 2).

—9—

May a superior, major or local, give each Sister a sum of money, say one dollar, with permission to buy some article or articles for herself, for her particular charge, or to purchase something for a relative or friend as a Christmas gift or at some other time of the year? Is this arrangement perfectly in keeping with the vow and virtue of poverty for both superior and subject?

Since superiors are not the owners of the community funds, but only the administrators thereof, they are not free to give any permissions they like. They may give small amounts of money to members of the community to be expended on things that are necessary or useful. They may not give such a permission for superfluous things or for luxuries. Subjects on their part may spend money given them by their superiors, unless they are certain that the permission exceeds the powers of the superior.

To answer our question: a superior might licitly give each Sister in the community a dollar provided the purpose for which it is to be used is specified and falls under the head of necessity or utility. Thus it is customary for some religious to distribute small objects of piety to their charges or to relatives at Christmas time, or as prizes or gifts on other occasions during the year. This would come within the range of licit giving, both on the part of the superior and on the part of the subject. If the superior were to say: "Here is a dollar, use it as you like," that must be understood within the meaning explained above.

The superior could not give a subject money and permission to use it literally "for anything you wish to get," as that would include superfluous and luxurious things; nor could the subject use such a permission for superfluities and luxuries.

—10—

In an election of delegates to the general chapter of a religious community would it be allowed: (1) to one voter to say to another: "If I vote for you as delegate, will you vote for N.N. as superior general?" (2) to a member of the chapter, whether local or general, to tell another for whom he has voted?

Canon 507, § 2 states very clearly and succinctly: "All must abstain from seeking votes either directly or indirectly for themselves or for others"; and canon 169, § 1, 2° tells us that a vote cast in an election is null and void unless it is secret. This, however, refers to a case in which one makes known to others *during the election* the person for whom he votes. If he does so *after* the election is over, this would not invalidate his vote, but his action would be very imprudent, to say the least, since it is the mind of the Church that secrecy should be preserved even after the election. For this reason canon 171, § 4 prescribes that all ballots be burned after an election.

—11—

What is meant by the "general absolution" which is granted to certain religious communities on certain feasts of the year? We refer to the general absolution for which the Roman Ritual gives the formula.

The "general absolution" referred to is a form of special blessing which carries with it a plenary indulgence. It is also granted on some feasts to the laity who are members of certain third orders secular.

—12—

May old albs be made into boys' surplices, or into any other garment? May badly worn albs be used as dust cloths? May the habits of religious which have been blessed be used for purposes other than mending old habits?

Articles blessed or consecrated for use in divine worship lose their blessing or consecration if they have been torn or have been changed in such a way that they are no longer suitable for their original purpose (c. 1305, § 1, 1°). Thus an alb which has had a sleeve torn off loses its blessing, as does a cincture which is torn in such a way that

it no long serves its purpose. Once these articles have lost their blessing, the materials may be put to other convenient uses. While it is ordinarily not allowed to deliberately change blessed articles in order that they may lose their consecration, still this may be done for a good reason, as in the case of such articles that are worn and must be replaced by new ones. Hence, all the uses proposed in the above questions may be allowed.

—13—

May the plenary indulgence at the hour of death (*in articulo mortis*) mentioned in the *Raccolta* be gained for himself by a person who has made the Heroic Act?

Authors dispute about this question. It was proposed to the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences which replied on January 23, 1901 that it did not wish to discuss the question (*non esse interloquendum*). Hence the problem is to be entrusted to Divine Providence.

—14—

In Father O'Connor's article, "Plenary Indulgences" [Review, I, (1942) p. 388], it is stated that a plenary indulgence may be gained *once a month* for receiving Holy Communion of Reparation in honor of the Sacred Heart. Many years ago I read that a plenary indulgence could be gained for every Communion of Reparation to the Sacred Heart. Which is correct?

By reason of an indult granted by Pope Benedict XV on July 1, 1921, the faithful may gain a plenary indulgence every time they receive Holy Communion of Reparation in honor of the Sacred Heart.

—15—

A religious congregation has no separate house for its novices. As a result there may be two or three novices who make their novitiate in one of the ordinary houses of the congregation. Under such conditions would it be permissible according to Canon Law for these novices to take an active part in the daily common recreations of the community?

While it is not required by canon law that the novitiate be established as a separate house, it is at least required that it be permanently established as a separate part of some existing house. Hence the congregation is not free to have the novices make their novitiate now in one house, now in another. Such a novitiate would be invalid according to canons 554 and 555, § 1, 3°. Supposing that the novitiate is established as a part of another religious house, canon



564, § 1 requires that, "as far as possible, it shall be separated from that part of the house inhabited by the professed religious, so that, without a special reason and without the permission of the superior or of the master, the novices may not have communication with the professed religious, nor these latter with the novices." Separation from the professed is required, therefore; but the novices may share the chapel, the refectory, and, if absolutely necessary, a common dormitory with them, provided they have a separate section for themselves in each of these places. The superior and the master of novices may share in the recreations of the novices; and, in order to avoid the monotony incident upon their small numbers, they may occasionally (on feast days, for instance) allow some of the professed religious to spend the time of recreation with them. But it certainly is contrary to the letter as well as to the spirit of the law to allow the novices to share the daily recreations of the professed members of the community.

## —16—

Our constitutions state that "the novitiate lasts for an entire year." Can the general council extend that time in order that novices may be better prepared to meet their obligations after profession?

No, the general chapter has no power to change the constitutions. It may request the Holy See (or the bishop, in the case of a diocesan congregation) to make such a change if that is deemed advisable. The request will probably be granted readily, provided it has the majority vote of the chapter.

## —17—

Does a professed religious need the permission of his superior to donate his blood to the Red Cross? If permission is required, is this because the matter pertains to the vow of poverty?

The donating of blood is simply an act of mercy. Neither money nor anything the equivalent of money is involved in the transaction; hence no permission is required on the score of poverty. Very likely, however, certain points of external discipline would be involved (for instance: leaving the house, visiting the clinic, and so forth); and permission might be required for these. It certainly seems fitting that blood donors should have an understanding with their superiors, and that the latter should place no unnecessary obstacle in the way of this laudable work of mercy.

## —18—

We supply a considerable number of parish churches and chapels with altar breads. Our policy is to send out a supply every two weeks unless requested otherwise. What are we to do when we receive instructions from pastors telling us to send altar breads only once a month, or even at longer intervals? What are the regulations regarding the length of time that hosts may be kept before consecrating?

The safe rule to follow with regard to pastors is to send the altar breads at the intervals requested. It is to be presumed that the pastors know the regulations in this regard. Even if they wish the altar breads sent at very long intervals, it is quite possible that they may be getting supplies from other sources.

With regard to the law that governs this matter, it is well for us to distinguish two questions: (1) the length of time that may elapse between the baking of altar breads and their consecration; and (2) the frequency with which the consecrated particles are to be renewed. The Code itself (cf. canons 815 and 1272) gives only a general answer to both these questions: it prescribes that the particles to be consecrated should be recently made, and that the particles already consecrated should be frequently renewed. The Code does, however, leave further determination to the local Ordinaries, whose directions are to be observed with great exactness (c. 1272). Moreover, one of the sources of canon 1272 is the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, which answers the second question very definitely by ordering that the consecrated particles be renewed weekly. Another source of the canon is a decree of the Congregation of Rites (n. 3621, ad 2) which enjoined that the rule given in the *Ceremonial* be kept. The Second Plenary Council of Baltimore (n. 268) made this rule obligatory on all priests in the United States.

The second question, therefore, is definitely answered for us. It is quite clear that, at least under normal conditions, the consecrated particles should be renewed every week. But we cannot give an equally definite answer to the first question—and that happens to be the question asked by our correspondent. The Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments (Dec. 7, 1918) condemned the practice of consecrating altar breads that are two or three months old, but it did not give an exact definition of "recently made." The estimates of approved authors range from two weeks to six weeks. These estimates, of course, presuppose that there is no special climatic condition that might affect the particles. The most common estimate, we believe, is that the par-

ticles to be consecrated should not be more than two weeks old.

All this is by way of information. The local Ordinary has the right to make regulations in this matter. He knows the conditions existing in his own diocese, and his regulations should be observed even though they differ from the estimates made by moralists and canonists.

—19—

During Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Retreat Sunday or Forty Hours, is it necessary to place a banner in front of the Blessed Sacrament while the Office is being chanted?

There seems to be no necessity for such a banner under the circumstances. The only occasion for which the placing of a banner before the Blessed Sacrament is required is when a sermon is preached during the Exposition (S.R.C. 3728, 2).

—20—

In the reading of the Passion during the Masses in Holy Week why is the sign of the cross not made on the forehead, the lips, and the heart, previous to the reading?

No definite reason can be assigned except that of custom which dates back for centuries. One may suggest that the reason is the same as for the omission of all the ordinary preliminaries to the reading of the Gospel: the *dominus vobiscum*, the signing of the Gospel text, the incensation of the Gospel book, and the carrying of lights. Perhaps the Church is eager to begin at once the heartrending story of our redemption, without waiting for the minutiae which normally introduce the reading of the "glad tidings."

—21—

Our constitutions which are approved by the Holy See say: "The right of admitting a candidate belongs to the superior general." Can either the general chapter or the general council pass a motion to the effect that all applications from candidates be submitted to the general council?

The Code of Canon Law has no provisions regarding the person who has the power to admit candidates to the postulancy, although canon 543 does determine that the major superior with the vote of the council or chapter admits to the novitiate and to the subsequent religious profession. Since your constitutions do not give the chapter or council a vote in the admission of candidates to the postulancy, this right belongs to the superior general alone. Neither chapter nor council can change the constitutions without the permission of the Holy See.

## Summer School Directory

[NOTE: This directory lists all colleges and universities that sent us information before our printing deadline. In making the directory we tried to select only such items as would be of special interest or value to our readers. Obviously the institutions listed here offer many courses of a more general nature, as well as other rich educational opportunities.]

### THE COLLEGE OF ST. CATHERINE, St. Paul 1, Minnesota.

In addition to the regular Liberal Arts course, there will be offered for the first time, professional courses leading to the library degree.—Sisters attending will find living accommodations at the College.—For further information write to: Director of the Summer Session.

### COLLEGE OF ST. FRANCIS, Joliet, Illinois.

Offers courses in *Catechetics*, *Gregorian Chant*, *Liturgy*.—Accommodations for religious on the campus.—Write to the Dean for further information.

### THE CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY, Omaha 2, Nebraska.

Special courses: *Methods of Teaching Religion in Elementary Schools*, by Rev. W. R. O'Donnell, S.J.; *Nursing Supervision*, by Miss K. R. Bottani; *Guidance and Counseling*, by Mrs. C. W. Hamilton; *Moral Problems*, a course in Moral Theology for Sisters exclusively, by Rev. G. Kelly, S.J.—Institutes and Seminars in the teaching of religion, the conducting of Sodalties, the problems of student counseling.—Conferences on *Christ and the Religious*, Sunday afternoons.—University dormitories and dining hall are available to Sisters.—The session lasts 8 weeks: from June 11 to August 4.—For further information write to: Rev. Henry W. Linn, S.J., Director, Summer Session.

### MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, 1131 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

Unusual opportunities for Sisters: *Problems in Christian Theism*, a course on the Unity and Trinity of God, by G. Augustine Ellard, S.J.—A spiritual conference each Sunday afternoon, the general theme of which will be, *Christ, the Model and Inspiration of the Religious*.—A discussion institute on current national and international problems considered in the light of Christian principles of morality and the teaching of the Church.—Accommodations: The University dormitories for women will provide adequate housing facilities for Sisters.—Session: July 2nd to August 13th.—For complete information write to: Rev. C. J. Ryan, S.J., Director of the Summer Session.

### MARYMOUNT COLLEGE, Salina, Kansas.

Religion (open to religious only): *Fundamentals of the Spiritual Life*, by Rev. Hugo J. Gerleman, S.J.—Board and room accommodations for religious at the college.—Session: June 13th to July 28th.—For further information address: The Dean of the Summer Session.

### MOUNT SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE, 12001 Chalon Road—Brentwood Heights, Los Angeles 24, California.

Of special interest to religious are courses in: the *Teaching of Religion on the Elementary and Secondary Levels*; the *Introduction to Philosophy*; the *History of Philosophy*.—Accommodations are provided at the college for Sisters who may wish to

be resident students. Bus transportation is provided for those who wish to be day students.—Sessions: July 1st to August 4th.—Address inquiries for further information to: The Dean.

ST. AMBROSE COLLEGE, Davenport, Iowa.

Courses of special interest:

**Art.** Courses in *Writing, Lettering, and Illuminating; Composition and Painting Technique*. In conjunction with these there will be Workshops under Catholic Art Association sponsorship. Father E. M. Catich, National President of the Association, will be in charge of the courses.—**Speech-Drama:** Fundamental courses in *Speech and Acting*; Courses in *Shakespearian Acting and Play-Direction*. The Acting and Direction classes will be conducted by Mr. Charles Costello, President of the National Catholic Theatre Conference.—**Music:** Courses under the direction of Father Cletus Madsen in *Parochial School Music; Music Appreciation and History; Theory; Applied Music* in voice, piano, and strings; *Organized Choir-Work*, with credit.—**Physical Education for Nuns:** Courses in the theory and practice of conducting physical education classes in primary and secondary schools.

Ample accommodations for religious on the campus.—For further information, write to the Registrar.

ST. BONAVENTURE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY, St. Bonaventure P.O., New York. Offers a complete program of Theological Courses for Sisters and Teachers of Religion. The program, which is now in its seventh year, may be completed in five summers and leads to the degree of M.A.—Requirements: A.B. degree, fundamentals of Scholastic Philosophy, reading knowledge of Latin.—Accommodations for religious on the College campus.—Full program in the Arts and Sciences available.—Registration for Summer School, July 2nd.—For information apply to the Rev. Dean.

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY, 221 No. Grand Boulevard, St. Louis 3, Missouri.

**Institutes:** *Canon Law for Religious*. Director: Reverend Adam C. Ellis, S.J. Lectures on the Canons of the Code affecting religious directly, especially for superiors, mistresses of novices, councillors, bursars, etc. June 25th to July 7th. Sessions every morning.—*Mental Prayer in the Formation of Young Religious*. Director: Reverend James R. O'Neill, S.J. For novice mistresses and those directing young religious. Lectures on the objectives of mental prayer; difficulties and solutions; methods of developing habits of prayer. June 25th to July 7th. Sessions every afternoon.—*Secondary School Administration*. Director: Reverend Wilfred M. Mallon, S.J. For Catholic high school principals and prospective administrators. Lectures by experts in the field and discussions on key problems in curriculum, guidance, testing programs, extra-curricular activities, etc. June 19, 20, 21, 22. Sessions every afternoon.—*Institute for Sisters in Rural Schools*. Director: Monsignor Luigi Ligutti, assisted by Mr. C. Arild Olson of the Farm Security Administration. Lectures will center on the problem of recreation for rural youth. June 13, 14, 15. Sessions morning and afternoon.

**Six-Week Courses.** (Second Session: June 18th to July 28th).

For Elementary School Teachers: *Special Methods in the Teaching of Elementary School Religion*, by Sister Mary Agnesine, S.S.N.D.; *The Dogmatic Content of Elementary School Religion*, by Reverend E. J. Fortman, S.J.

For Secondary School Teachers: *The Moral Content of Secondary School Religion*, by Reverend Bakewell Morrison, S.J.; *Apologetic and Religious Values in the High School English Curriculum*, by Reverend Thomas J. Lynam, S.J.; *The Latinity of the Roman Missal*, by Reverend James Kleist, S.J.

## SUMMER SCHOOL DIRECTORY

*Accommodations* for Sisters can be arranged through the Reverend F.J. O'Hern, S.J., 221 North Grand Boulevard.—For further information write: Reverend Paul C. Reinert, S.J., Director of the Summer Session.

UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT, McNichols Road at Livernois, Detroit, Michigan.  
Of special interest: A course in *Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, by Father Robert B. Eiten, S.J. The purpose of the course is to acquaint religious with a knowledge and appreciation of the principles of the spiritual life. The following topics are included: the interior life; the divine life of grace; the Indwelling Trinity; our incorporation in Christ; Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace; mental prayer, acquired and mystical; the sacraments; Christian perfection and its fruition, heaven.—*Accommodations* for a limited number of Sisters at Mount Mary Convent, Quincy and Santa Rosa, Detroit, near the university campus.—Session June 18th to July 27th.—For further information, write to the Dean.

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## EXPLANATION OF THE MASS

*The Sacrifice We Offer* is the title of a handy little book on the ceremonies of the Mass written by Father Hubert McEvoy, S.J., of Edinburgh, Scotland. Each distinct step in the liturgy of the low Mass is illustrated by a picture and explained on one page of text. Prayers selected from various Masses are interspersed throughout the book. The text is simple and dignified. The pictures are quite good, despite the fact that the war-time printing dulls their effect. Published by Oliver and Boyd, Ltd., Tweeddale Court, Edinburgh. Pp. 110. Price, 3/6.

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## MARYKNOLL MISSION LETTERS

Like its predecessors, the present volume of *Maryknoll Mission Letters* (1944, Volume II) strikes an optimistic note and affords interesting and informative reading. The letters are from missionaries in China and Latin America. They record some of the simple, intimate details of daily life that are crowded off the pages of the daily papers. Published by: The Field Afar Press, 121 East 39th St., New York, N. Y. Pp. viii + 55. Price: 50 cents.

## Jesus Christ in the Writings of Ramière

Dominic Unger, O.F.M.Cap.

THE centenary of the Apostleship of Prayer naturally reminds us of the tireless organizer of the Apostolate of Prayer, Father Henry Ramière, S.J., who was also the founder of the *Sacred Heart Messenger* in France. He was born at Castres, France, in 1821 and entered the Society of Jesus in 1839. For many years he was professional teacher of theology, and he attended the Vatican Council as theological adviser of the Bishop of Beauvais.

His chief interest as theologian was to popularize theology in order to imbue Catholics with a true and more profound knowledge of Christian life and to inspire them to live this life. To attain this he wrote numerous articles in various periodicals, most of them in *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, through which he reached a vast audience. Many of these articles have been published in book form.<sup>1</sup>

While other writers of his time were busying themselves with defending the faith against the attacks of outsiders, Father Ramière was interested in giving Catholics a clearer knowledge and better appreciation of the divine life that was in them—"the positive approach" we label it today. In this Father Ramière was ahead of his time, as also in the doctrines he stressed.

Though he did most of his writing in the third quarter of the last century, his doctrines are very timely today. What he preached in season and out of season in all his

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<sup>1</sup>The summary of Father Ramière's teaching given in the present article is taken from three of his books: *Le Regne Social du Coeur de Jesus* (Toulouse, 1892); *The Laws of Providence* (Philadelphia, 1891); and *The Apostleship of Prayer* (Baltimore, 1866).

writings has been the subject of sermons and writings especially these past fifty years. He insisted on telling people about the beautiful life of grace that is in them, how they are made divine and sons of God through grace, of the sublime yet simple doctrine of their being members of the Mystical Body of Christ, about the power and loveliness of the Sacred Heart, about the grandeur of Christ the King (and that a social King), of their obligation to establish and spread the social reign of Christ, how Jesus Christ alone can be the salvation of society and civilization. No doubt he now realizes, and rejoices, that some of these topics have since been the subject of an entire papal encyclical, and that others have been emphasized time and again in various encyclicals.

### *1. Christ the Mediator of Man's Divine Life*

A glance at the topics about which Father Ramière wrote tells us that Christ is the central theme of all of them. One can almost say that he wrote of only one topic, Jesus Christ. He followed the principle that he gave to writers: The hearth around which all Christian doctrine centers is Jesus Christ, just as He is the center of all of God's works.

How is Christ the center of all of God's works? It is through Christ Jesus that God wishes to be glorified by the world, and through Him man is to attain glory in God:

This title of *Mediator* given to the Word made flesh admirably sums up all the designs of God on the human race. It makes us understand that through Him God wishes to communicate Himself to man, and that also through Him man is to be filled with the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19) . . . His activity has a double movement; it reaches unceasingly from God to us and from us to God. On the one side, He brings down God to our level; on the other, He puts us in a condition to raise ourselves up to God. While His teachings show us the divine truth, His interior light makes us capable of grasping the truth. While His divine countenance reflects on our weak gaze the



features of the Divine Beauty, the instinct of His Spirit impels our hearts, all carnal as they are, to become like unto Him. In one word, as in Him God has become man, so in Him men are to become divine. (*The Laws of Providence*, pp. 75-76.)

This divinization of man by the God-Man is a capital idea in Father Ramière's theology:

. . . Jesus Christ not only possesses the perfection of our nature. He also possesses the fulness of the Divinity . . . When God became man, He intended not only to make man complete; most of all He had it in view to make man divine . . . By the very act by which He took upon Himself our wretched nature, He communicated to it His divine life. He is not only the Model Man, but He is also the Head of humanity become divine. (*The Laws of Providence*, p. 89).

Our deification is as certain as the dogma of the divinity of Christ, of which it is the complement. It is not merely for itself that the holy Humanity of Jesus has received the fulness of the divinity through the personal union with the Word, but also to make all humanity divine by granting a share of His plenitude to all who wish to receive His communication. When God predestined His own Son to be the Son of Mary, He predestined us to become His adopted sons by union with His only-begotten Son (Ephesians 1:5).

In becoming incarnate the Word of God communicated His divinity in a very personal manner to one soul and one body in Christ. But his limitless love, embracing the whole world, made it possible for all men to share in that participation of the divine life. "His (Christ's) Incarnation has no other end or aim," than to communicate His divine life to us:

But if the fulness of the divinity belongs substantially to Jesus Christ alone (Col. 2:9), all who are united to Him by holy baptism become partakers in this fulness, each according to his measure (John 1:16) . . . All other individual natures belonging to the race of Adam shall be called to unite themselves to this privileged nature, and to receive by this union a very real communication of its divine life. There shall be but one only God-Man; but all men who shall be

willing to accept the influence of the Man-God shall be enabled to become divine men, to perform in Him divine acts, and through Him to attain to divine bliss. There shall be one only Son of Adam who can glory in being the only and the natural Son of the Heavenly Father; but all those who shall be willing to receive this only Son shall become thereby the adopted sons of His Father and shall acquire a strict right to share in His heavenly inheritance. (*The Apostleship of Prayer*, p. 138; and *The Laws of Providence*, p. 90.)

It is possible for Christ to be the Head of all men and to make them divine because He is personally united with God and because He possesses the fulness of divine life which He can communicate to them. Christ's vital influence on us is forcefully stated by Father Ramière:

Jesus Christ is, therefore, in a very real sense, the Head of humanity and of the whole spiritual creation: for from Him alone does the divine life pour itself forth on angels and men, as really as animal life spreads from the head into every part of our body. From Him and from Him alone proceed all supernatural acts which are done in heaven and earth. We cannot acquire the least merit, do the least action, conceive the least thought, pronounce the least word, in the supernatural order, if these different movements are not in our hearts through an impulse of His Divine Heart. This adorable Heart is for all humanity, in the order of grace, what the sun, in the physical order, is for the earth and the other planets which gravitate around it. (*The Laws of Providence*, pp. 93 f.)

The fact that Christ has made it possible for us to receive His own Body and Blood in the Eucharist is an argument that He intended us to be divine. This union of man with Christ in Communion is "the image and the beginning of the blissful communion of eternity." The most beautiful aspect of the divine life that is in us at present is that it is only the bud; the full flower will bloom in the next life:

It is really in glory that the Incarnate Word fully accomplishes His task as Head of regenerated humanity. This mission of His shall be consummated only when all the elements destined to form a part of this body, having passed through the trials of time, shall be united

with their Head in their true country. Then from Head to members life shall flow without hindrance and without other measure than the degree of their union with Him. Then He shall communicate to them the light of the Word which is His own and by it He shall make them capable of seeing, as He sees, the Divine Essence. Then, too, He shall communicate to them the Spirit of God which belongs equally to Him, inasmuch as He produces [*sic*] It conjointly with His Father. By this Spirit He shall make them able to love God as He loves Him, and consequently to taste as He tastes the bliss of God (*The Laws of Providence*, pp. 96 f.)

Through the privilege of deification, God permits man to realize his most daring dreams. Man naturally thirsts for the Infinite. He attempted to satisfy this thirst by the crude creations of idolatry or by the air-castles of pantheism. By idolatry he strove to bring God down to man only to strip Him of His divinity. By pantheism he attempted to make man divine, only to annihilate him. These natural tendencies toward the Infinite, which apart from Jesus end only in absurd crimes, Jesus Christ realizes perfectly in Himself; and He enables men to realize them in themselves. Jesus Christ in whom God is substantially united to our nature, gives Himself to each man by His grace and offers to make each one blessed with Him in glory.

Not only man but also the angels come under this deifying influence of Christ. Because Christ is God and because He has the fulness of grace, He is able to give divine life also to the angels. And this makes Him Head also of the angels. "From Him alone does the divine life pour itself forth on angels and men . . . From Him and from Him alone proceed all supernatural acts which are done in heaven and earth."

What a glorious mission God has given to Christ Jesus! Are we allowed to conclude, then, that the most important and first reason for the Incarnation is the deification of *men*? Not at all! According to Father Ramière the deifi-

cation of the human nature of *Christ* is the more important. The Eternal Word of God became man first of all to communicate His divine life to the human soul and body to which He united Himself personally. The glory of God is the ultimate end of all divine communications. And God wanted to manifest His glory primarily by the most prodigal communication of His divine life.

## 2. *Christ the End of All Creation*

Father Ramière tells us time and again that Jesus Christ is the end of all creation. The glory of God is the ultimate end of all creatures; and these must tend to glorify God by all their acts. That is the first law of divine Providence. The Eternal Word, being God, shares in this ultimate and inalienable right to receive glory from creatures. However, the Word by becoming Man inherits this right to receive glory from all creatures by a new title. Even as Man He is the End of all creatures. In this He shares the glory that comes to God Himself. By His Incarnation He became the immediate end of all creatures; for all creatures must glorify God by glorifying Christ. This is especially true of man to whom the God-man has united Himself most intimately. It is the eternal plan of God that Christ receive glory as Head of the Mystical Body, in which the members share His divine life and reproduce under infinitely varied forms the perfection for which He offers Himself as Model. It is the eternal plan of God that Christ, being both Creator and creature should recapitulate all things in Himself (Ephesians 1:10), and thus give glory to God.

Even the angels must glorify the God-Man; they, too, were created for this purpose; Christ is their immediate end. St. Paul expressed that when he wrote to the Colossians that all things in heaven and on earth have been created in Christ and for Him (1:16). That is the full force of the

Greek text. Divine Providence directs all creatures toward that end. The Apostle expresses this same thought when he writes that all creatures have been subjected to Christ (Ephesians 1:22). And from this the angels have not been excepted. That is why they were ordered to adore Christ when He made His entrance into the world (Hebrews 1:6). "There is therefore no exception: all beings in the broad expanse of the universe belong to the Man-God, and all events that fill the long series of centuries have for their end the glorification of Christ."

### 3. *Christ the Model of Man's Perfection*

By manifesting the divine perfections in a most excellent mode and degree, Christ shows that God intended Him primarily for that purpose. God had created man according to the image of His eternal Ideal. Since this Ideal which man had to imitate was invisible and hard to grasp, God willed to become Man and to embody in this Man all the perfections of which a human nature is capable. The God-Man is at the same time "the express image of uncreated beauty and the supreme type of all created beauty." Christ, summing up in Himself all perfections, is the model of perfection for all men:

Seek where you will such a model, practicable for every mind and any courage, greater than the greatest, yet not beyond the reach of the lowest, a model which shall reveal all perfection to all and, while it reveals, shall make perfection amiable—and you shall not find it outside of Jesus Christ . . . Yes, He is your Model! Would you know what is wanting to you and what you have in excess? Measure yourself on the model of Jesus Christ. Would you find the unity of your being, which is now scattered in a thousand ways? Compare each part of it with the corresponding being of Jesus Christ, and you shall find the place of each faculty, the direction to give to each movement. You shall find order, and with order perfection, peace, true happiness. (*The Laws of Providence*, pp. 83 f.)

Christ is the end of all men. Christ is the model of all

men. And it is precisely by imitating Christ that men must attain the end for which they were created:

In the present order, therefore, all creatures will have for their end to glorify Jesus Christ; and their happiness as well as their perfection will of necessity have for its measure the degree of their resemblance with Jesus Christ and of their union with His Divine Heart . . . Is it not, then by imitating Him that we shall be assured of imitating God more perfectly, and consequently of attaining the true end of our nature, which consists in glorifying God by the imitation of His infinite perfections? (*The Laws of Providence*, pp. 77 f.)

#### 4. *Christ the First of God's Creatures*<sup>2</sup>

This picture of Christ and of His work, according to Father Ramière, certainly strikes an optimistic chord in every heart. But we still do not have the complete picture. When Father Ramière states that Christ is the Mediator of grace for angels and men, when he states that Christ is the end of all men and of all creatures, he really means *all*, in the sense that the angels in the very beginning got their grace from Christ and that man from his creation got his grace from Christ, and both from the very beginning had to give glory to Christ.

In other words, Christ was predestined not after the fall of man, but before all men and angels. "Our Mediator would have a great mission to fulfill, even if we had not sinned, there is no doubt about this; but after our sin His mission is summed up in the expiation and reparation of this fault." Jesus assuredly became man to save man from his sins; His very name informs us about this. However, to redeem man was not the primary, much less the

<sup>2</sup>For the sake of those who may not be familiar with the theological background, it seems advisable to mention that the three opinions of Father Ramière cited in this section (namely that the angels and our first parents at the time of their creation got their grace from Christ; that the Word would have become Incarnate, even though Adam had not sinned; and that the sin of Lucifer consisted in a refusal to adore the God-Man), although growing more common, are not accepted by all theologians. Father Ramière allowed his enthusiasm too much rein when he referred to any of them as certain.

only, purpose of Christ's existence. Even Lucifer is proof of that. Lucifer is the first and foremost enemy of Christ. Christ was shown to him on the day of his trial as the Head of all creation. Lucifer proudly refused to submit Himself to the God-Man. He rebelled and was cast out of heaven. Ever since he has been prowling about seeking revenge by trying to rob his divine Conqueror of the worship of men.

Christ wrought our salvation through the redemption on the cross. But even in this He does not seek the salvation of man first. He seeks first the glory of God. And in seeking the glory of God He is procuring His own glory. His eternal victory through the cross will be to His eternal glory. The salvation of man is of subordinate importance.

### *Conclusion*

So Christ is the center of all creation, the brilliant ring which unites the Almighty's works with the divine Artificer, the end of all operations and of all the designs of Providence. He is also in a very true sense and by a sacred title the Head of humanity, the supreme goal of all the designs of God in regard to our race, the rule of all our progress, the unifying bond of all our destinies. If He is not that, He is nothing. For to suppose that God became Man to be a simple accessory of the human race, is to attribute to divine Wisdom a very plain absurdity.

Few theologians, says Father P. Galtier, S.J.,<sup>8</sup> have had a greater influence on the development of Catholic piety than Father Ramière; hardly anyone has contributed so much as he to give the faithful a genuine relish for Catholic doctrine.

Father Ramière once wrote that if we believe more firmly the truths about our being deified by Christ through

<sup>8</sup>*Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique*, art., Ramière, H.



grace, and if we have them constantly in mind, they will exert a wonderful power to elevate our hearts above the fears and puerile ambitions of this earth; we will gauge our affections by the level of our true dignity. That is why he wove the beautiful truths of Christ into his spiritual conferences; for example, on magnanimity, on confidence, on the Catholic spirit. That is why he wants preachers to preach, and writers to write about, and teachers to teach Christ who is the center of all doctrine.

Father Ramière was following the principle that St. Paul used constantly: A Christian should be well-grounded in the knowledge of Christ in order to live a Christlike life. A profound knowledge of Christ and of our life in Christ is one of the greatest motives for holiness of life. In presenting positive Catholic doctrine about Christ as he did, Father Ramière has done a service of which we should avail ourselves, and for which he merits our undying gratitude.

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#### MEDITATION BOOKS FOR MINOR SEMINARIES

In answer to our request published in the January issue of the REVIEW, several readers have submitted the following titles of meditation books suitable for boys in minor seminaries: *In the Morning of Life: Considerations & Meditations for Boys*, by Herbert Lucas, S.J., B. Herder, 1906; *Following Our Divine Model*, by J. F. McElhone, C.S.C., Herder, 1928; *Ye are Christ's*, by Joseph Rickaby, S.J., Burns & Oates, 1903; *With Jesus to the Priesthood*, by J. Grimal, translated by G. Shaughnessy, Dolphin Press; *Meditations on the Passion and Eastertide*, by F.P.H., Sulpician Seminary Press, Washington, D. C. See also the *Seminarian's Reading List* (pamphlet for minor and major seminaries), published by St. Meinrad Historical Essays, St. Meinrad Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana.



## Saintly Sisters in the Shadows

Gerald Ellard, S.J.

ON A LITTLE TRIP recently I took along a slim volume on St. Augustine that had just come to hand. It was a tiny volume, but packed with so much information that reading it turned out to be a most delightful adventure. Thus in a short chapter dealing with Augustine's influence on monastic life I suddenly found myself reading:

"Communities of women existed in Augustine's own diocese of Hippo Regius. His own sister became Abbess. After her death there occurred a revolt against her successor. The dissatisfied appealed to Augustine (*Ep. 211*). He replied in great distress and declined to pay them a visit, because he was sure the dissatisfied were in the wrong. He must have refused the concession which they demanded, because such concessions were subversive of sound discipline. He recalled them very firmly to submission. To obey the Prioress as a mother, and also the priest who was in charge of the house. He took the occasion to draw up elaborate rules of conduct, which became the model for other houses, and the basis of corresponding regulations for communities of men."<sup>1</sup>

St. Augustine's *sister*? Did he really have a sister? What was her name? Where has she been hiding all these years? Can you recall ever so much as hearing of her in any previous reading about Augustine? These were questions keeping me company until I could get home into the library

<sup>1</sup>W. J. S. Simpson, *St. Augustine's Episcopate* (New York: Macmillan): quoted with publisher's permission.

to look for this abbess sister in the footnotes and fine print.

First, there was *Epistle 211*, truly a noble document. It lacks superscription and date as it has come down to us; and editors agree in assigning it to the latest years in Augustine's life, say about 425. But unless I have missed it, there is no clear evidence of relationship between Augustine and the recently-deceased woman apart from this passage: "Consider what an evil thing it is, that, born of God we ought to rejoice in unity, but must nonetheless bewail dissension in the monastery. Persevere in your good intention, and you will not wish to change the superioress under whom she became your mother in that monastery, not of the womb but of the spirit. For all of you who came thither found her serving under the holy rule of my sister, or giving satisfaction as the superioress who received you. Under her you had your training; under her you were veiled; under her you increased in numbers; and you are now so rebellious that you would change her, when in fact you ought to weep if we but proposed to change her . . ."<sup>2</sup> Is this one bare reference to "my sister" all the evidence there is for the blood relationship?

There is a biography of St. Augustine described as deriving chiefly from his own writings. Dealing with Augustine's family it mentions the brother, Navigius, baptized with him at Milan, and then, with obvious hesitation, goes on to refer to this sister: "And also, *it would seem*, a blood sister of the same holy bishop, who, being left a widow, served Christ for many years to the day of her death as head of a convent of nuns."<sup>3</sup> Augustine's letter did speak of her many years of service as head of the convent, but said nothing I could find about her being a

<sup>2</sup>In the Migne *Patrology*, 33, 960-65: a better text in the Vienna *Corpus Scriptorum*, 57, 356-71.

<sup>3</sup>Migne, 32, 67.

widow. So here was one new clue. Augustine's earliest biography was by one who claimed to have known him intimately for fully forty years, St. Possidius, who was in fact a monk of Augustine's own household. Possidius, if any one, would know if Augustine really had a sister! What does he say? "No woman ever frequented his home," he wrote; "no woman ever stayed there, not even *his blood sister*, who, being left a widow, serving God a long time, lived to the day of her death as superioress of nuns."<sup>4</sup> So Possidius is the source of the subsequent statement, and the passage in *Epistle 211* is apparently the only extant word Augustine has left of her.

But there *she* is, St. Augustine's holy sister—Sister Anonyma, shall we call her?—as she emerges a little from the background to take her place in the band of saintly sisters of great saints.<sup>5</sup> What sort of woman was she? Was she older or younger than Augustine? Did she have a mind of matchless genius like her giant brother? One thing seems certain: being a woman, she must have shared largely in the sorrow and grief that were Monica's lot for so long; for Augustine was thirty-two at his Baptism, and Monica survived that event but a year. Being a woman so devoted to God, she must have had an intimate share in the worries and cares and responsibilities, in the triumphs and in the defeats marking the ministry of her brother's life from his Baptism in 387 to her death about 425. Let's look her up in heaven when we get there: she'll have a lot to tell us.

<sup>4</sup>Migne, 32, 55.

<sup>5</sup>A confrere points out that Steiger calls this sister of Augustine's Perpetua, but it is not known whence he derived the name: cf. *Periodica*, 13, 75. It was also pointed out to me that, prior to the saints mentioned, St. Pachomius established a convent for nuns under his own sister Mary, and in the sixth century St. Caesarius of Arles rebuilt one recently destroyed, of which his sister Caesaria became superioress. The rule of St. Caesarius is said to be the first written specifically for women: it introduced several features which later became practices in convents for women (cf. *Dict. d'arch. chret.*, II, col. 3201-3203).

Meanwhile let us name some others in the group of saintly sisters to the great.

There was, of course, St. Marcellina, sister to St. Ambrose, whom conceivably St. Augustine's sister may have known personally in the Milan period. For Marcellina was a well-known figure to the Catholics of her brother's great see-city. She was older than Ambrose, and had her share in educating him. On Christmas Day, 353, when Ambrose was a stripling, Marcellina made her vow of virginity and was veiled by Pope Liberius in St. Peter's, Rome. When Ambrose was so unexpectedly elected Bishop of Milan, before he had even been baptized, one of his "readjustments" was to persuade his brother Satyrus to give up his own career to supervise the bishop's temporalities. Then, or later, Marcellina took up her residence with her brothers at Milan; and an unusually close bond existed between the "boys" and their sister. We have three matchless letters of Ambrose addressed to Marcellina; and a like number of his treatises, including that "best-seller" *On Virginity*, are dedicated to her. When Satyrus died, about 392, Ambrose preached the funeral sermon and bore immortal testimony to the place she held in her brothers' hearts. Marcellina's own death came *after* Ambrose's, a circumstance that doubtless cheated us of a full-length story of her life. St. Marcellina's feast is July 17th.

Ambrose and Basil the Great, luminaries of the West and East respectively, held each other in the very highest esteem; and so their two "sister-mothers" would have surely heard of each other, if no more. Macrina was the eldest of ten children, three of whom became bishops, and two of these Doctors of the Church Universal. She owed her superior education chiefly to her grandmother, also called Macrina. She was betrothed at about twelve; but after the prospective husband died, Macrina decided to take

the vow of virginity. She became sister-teacher to the younger children, and never was the lovable relationship of sister and brothers set in a more beautiful light than in her relations with her famous brothers. Peter, later Bishop of Sebaste, felt he owed his whole training to her. Basil the Great unashamedly attributed his "conversion" to his talks with Macrina. After he had become Bishop of Caesarea, he placed her and their mother, Emelia, on a remote family estate, which became the site of their convent-home. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, the same known as "The Philosopher" in Oriental Christianity, ascribed to her the greatest stimulus to his studies. He came by chance to pay her a visit, and found her deathly sick. So, after assisting at her deathbed (she died at about fifty around the year 380), Gregory gave her story to the world. Thank you, St. Macrina, for forming those holy brothers, who under God had the chief part to play in stemming the Arian floods.

Macrina's stirring story finds many points of similarity with St. Florence's (Florentina) two and a half centuries later. Florence, too, had three brothers bishops; and one of these has also won the title of Doctor of the Church. Just as Macrina's brothers were a deciding factor in dissipating Arianism in the land of its origin, so Florence's played a determining role in bringing the Visigoths of Spain back to Catholic unity. But in Florence's case it was the brother's solicitude for a baby sister that gave her her fine education. The oldest of her brothers, Leander, a Benedictine monk and an exile by a tyrant king's orders, was a companion during several years to another monk then acting as a "papal legate" to the court of Constantinople, the man we call St. Gregory the Great. Gregory's most celebrated *Book on Morals* is dedicated to Leander in memory of their common sojourn by the Golden Horn. Leander

on his return became Bishop of Seville. As such he wrote a "Rule" for Florence, after establishing her in a convent at Ecija, where a brother of them both, St. Fulgentius we call him, was bishop for so long. Leander's successor at Seville was his still more celebrated brother, Isidore, whose services to his flock are outweighed in historical importance by his providential labors in summing up and bequeathing to posterity the wisdom of the past. Isidore's encyclopedia, as the *Book of Etymology* really deserves to be called, gave its author an immortal place in the history of Christian culture; hence it is all the more gratifying in the present connection to recall that Isidore's two treatises *On Virginity* are dedicated to his dear Florence, who is thus associated with the memory of her brothers.

The mention just now of Benedictines and of St. Gregory suggests that all we know of St. Benedict's sister, St. Scholastica, derives from the pages of St. Gregory's *Dialogues*. But the story of that sudden thunderstorm and her immortal rejoinder, "I asked you for a favor and you refused it; I asked God, and He granted it," serves yearly notice through the Breviary that God can intervene in brother-and-sister disputes to redress the balance of the "weaker" sex! Scholastica's body, death soon overtaking her, was brought to Monte Cassino and placed in the grave Benedict had ready for himself.

Their joint tomb reminds us of Benedict's great missionary son, St. Boniface, and his "sister" Lioba. The genealogy-tree would say she was rather Boniface's *cousin*; but that slight detail apart, she was dearest "sister" to him always, a sister by agreement, as it were, one on whom he sweetly depended for books, for vestments, for comforts of body and soul year after year. He summoned "sister" Lioba to share the labors of the mission field, and it was his wish that she rest with him in a double grave. She outlived him a

full quarter century, and was first buried where she died. But some fifty years later her bones went to Fulda where they await the rising from the dead with those of her kinsman Boniface.

There was an actual brother and sister group, two boys and a girl, among those very first helpers of Boniface; princes of the blood they were, with their unwieldy Saxon names of Willibald, Wunibald and Walburga. In life the two brothers were doubtless better known than she; but by reason of healings at her tomb, she has far outstripped them in Christian memory. Willibald was the oldest of the three; and after becoming a monk in far-off Italy he was sent in Boniface's train to Germany, where he became Bishop of Eichstädt. Wunibald, the next in age, was also a monk, and he was recruited for the German missions at the same time as his brother. Boniface set him over various places from which he was regularly driven out. In 748 sister Walburga was brought from England to set up, with Wunibald, a double-abbey at Bischofsheim. She was later made Abbess at Heidenheim. Brother Abbot St. Wunibald died in 760, and Walburga was thereupon commissioned by her brother, Bishop St. Willibald, to take charge of Wunibald's community of monks. She predeceased her brother by a year, or else I am sure people would have watched to see if she would pick up the crozier and shepherd her brother's diocese! In dreamy Eichstädt the brothers' tombs are all but forgotten, but at hers a centuries-old pilgrimage of healing centers.

Being a relative of St. Bernard of Clairvaux made pretty sweeping claims upon one; but in all that glorious *Family that Overtook Christ*, as graphically recalled for us not long since, the father, mother, uncle, brothers, cousins, and "in-laws," none is more engaging, more charming than Humbeline, a year younger than Bernard, her sometime

playmate. Being once publicly rebuffed by Bernard for worldliness, Humbeline sought her husband's consent to enter religion, where she soon made the "Bernard" mark for sanctity. In the Cistercian calendar her feast is February 12th.

In that strangest year of his life, when Thomas Aquinas was being held a prisoner in his own family's dungeons to thwart his determination to be a Dominican, who was it supplied his little needs, principally of books? Yes; you have guessed rightly—a devoted sister. "A brother helped by a brother is like a strong city," Scripture says, and in the story of sanctity the collaboration of brother and sister is an everyday occurrence.

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#### VOCATION BOOKLETS

The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph's Convent, Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa, have published an attractive booklet, *I Am . . . the Life*, describing the life of their Sisters from postulancy through the novitiate and the early years of teaching to final profession. A series of beautiful photographs enhance the value of the booklet.

*Christ Calls*, by Theodore Heck, O.S.B., is designed to help teachers in grade and high schools to foster vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. Of special value are the complete lists of minor seminaries and religious communities in the United States and an extensive bibliography of vocation literature. Published by The Grail, St. Meinrad, Indiana. Pp. 72. \$.25; 5 for \$1.00; 10 or more, 15 cents each.



## Mary Mediatrix of All Graces

Thomas J. Motherway, S.J.

**D**EVOTION to the Blessed Virgin is a gift of God. But like all God's choicest graces it demands our own personal cooperation. It must be exercised. Otherwise it will not have the vitality nor exert the influence that it should in our spiritual life. It cannot be just taken for granted and left to take care of itself. It must be nourished or it will not grow as it ought. It must be cultivated by our own earnest efforts or it will not produce the results that our Lord and His Blessed Mother intend in our souls.

The cultivation of devotion to our Lady will consist to a great extent in prayerful reflexion on her prerogatives and her wonderful virtues. Now the first element of such reflexion is an endeavor to understand well what our faith teaches about Mary. For that reason we shall try to explain the teaching of the Church concerning one of her principal titles to our love and confidence. It is that of her mediation between us and her divine Son.

Our Lady is Mediatrix in the sense that no petition of men can come to Christ except through her; also no grace or favor comes to men from Christ except through Mary. The Blessed Virgin is therefore the *universal intercessor* of the human race. She is also the *universal dispenser* of all the graces given us by God. Moreover we sometimes hear our Lady called *Coredemptrix*. Pope Pius XI used that term in speaking of her. Is that just another name for Mediatrix?

### *Coredemptrix*

To answer this question let us briefly analyze the word

*mediator*. It can and does mean redeemer, but it can evidently have a wider meaning than that. A mediator is a go-between. Now that may imply merely the making of intercession for another, pleading for him, or, very simply, praying for him. Again, a mediator may be one who does not offer my petitions to an influential person from whom I seek a favor, but who dispenses the favor or favors that this person wishes to grant me.

Hence a mediator can be any one of three things or all three simultaneously. The question we have put concerning the Blessed Virgin comes then to this: is she not only our intercessor and the dispenser of all the favors that God gives us through Christ our Lord, but is she also *in some way*, under Christ, our redeemer or redemptrix? To this we must say, *yes*. We shall give the reasons for our affirmative reply.

Christ our Lord redeemed us by satisfying God's justice for the sins and offenses of all men throughout all time, and by meriting for us all the gifts and graces involved in our restoration to the adopted sonship of God. This redemption, which was wrought by our Savior once for all on Calvary, is called by theologians the *objective redemption*. Available at all times for all men, it first becomes ours when we are made members of Christ's Body by baptism into His Church and become capable of receiving all the other sacraments of the Church. We share more fully in that redemption with every increase of grace in our souls. It is clear then that the fruits of Christ's redeeming life and death must be *applied* to each individual soul. This partaking of the fruits of our Lord's redemption we call the *subjective redemption*.

Now in the process of the subjective redemption, i.e. in the application of our Lord's redemption to our souls, God has wonderfully arranged that other men should have a

part, not only through their prayers for us but also through their own merits, gained by their cooperation with the grace of Christ. Because of their intercession and their merits the graces won by our Lord in His objective redemption are applied by God to our souls. It is in this way that the just can with St. Paul fill up in their flesh what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body, which is the Church (Colossians 1, 24). In this way they can, following an exhortation of Pope Pius XI, become coredeemers of their fellows. And so too in assisting at Mass, according to the words of the Canon, we offer the Holy Sacrifice with the priest for the redemption of our own souls and the souls of others. The redemption of which there is question here is the subjective redemption. It is Christ's objective redemption realized in human subjects.

It is evident that of all the just among mere human beings the most preeminently just and holy is the Blessed Mother of God. Her merits are commensurate with her sanctity. But the latter is so immense that Pope Pius IX was able to say, in the dogmatic declaration of the Immaculate Conception, that it exceeds the sanctity of all the angels and saints taken together and is so great that only the mind of God can comprehend it. Mary's merits therefore are also surpassingly great. And since these determine her capacity as a redeemer of souls with Christ, it follows that this capacity too exceeds that of all the angels and saints individually and collectively. It is in fact so great that it extends to all men and to all the graces which have ever been received, or ever will be received, by any human being. It is in this sense that Mary is the Coredemptrix. *She merited the application of the fruits of our Savior's redemption in a way that is strictly universal. She merited the application of every grace to every soul that has ever existed or ever will exist.* That is the least that we must say when

we are asked what is meant by calling our Lady the Core-demptrix.

But does not this name mean more than what we have just said? Does it not mean that the Blessed Virgin by her works and sufferings in union with Christ our Lord, her Son, actually had a part with Him in the paying of our debt to the divine Justice and in the very winning of the graces which are the fruits of His redemption? In other words are not those fruits in themselves the effect of her coredeemption also, subordinate always to the work of Christ the divine Redeemer? *If we were to answer yes to this question, we would have to say that our Lady is the Coredemptrix not only in the sense that she merited the application of Christ's merits to all men but also in the sense that all that He won for us was won by her too.* We would have to say that she cooperated not only in the subjective redemption but also in the objective redemption of all other men besides herself.

Now there are some theologians today who answer yes to our question. They think they must answer thus mainly because of their understanding of certain statements of the Popes of recent times. Without indulging in controversy over the interpretation of these papal utterances, let it suffice for us to know that the view of these theologians concerning Mary's part in our redemption and their understanding of the pontifical pronouncements are not devoid of probability; but they are by no means certain. Furthermore their opinion is confronted with very serious difficulties, which its proponents have not satisfactorily solved. Therefore, until the Holy See approves such teaching, it should not be proposed to children in our schools or to the faithful in our churches.

Even if Mary is our Coredemptrix only in the lesser sense which we have explained, i.e. even if she merited only

the application of Christ's merits, it still remains true that she stands out with a preeminence all her own. She is the one member of Christ's Mystical Body who mediates between the Head and all the other members, helping to apply to every one of them every least gift that flows from the Head to every least member of that Body. Such preeminence amply justifies the beautiful title, *Coredemptrix*.

Mary therefore is the Mediatrix of all graces for three reasons: first because of her merits, secondly because of her universal intercession, and thirdly because of her part in the dispensing of all God's supernatural favors to men. Let us explain a little more fully what we mean by saying that the Blessed Virgin is the universal intercessor and the universal dispenser of the graces God gives us through Christ our Lord.

### *Universal Intercessor*

First we shall speak of Mary's intercession. Concerning that let us make an important observation. The mind of the Church seems to be that the Blessed Mother's intercession is between us and her Son and not directly between us and the Most Blessed Trinity. This fact seems to be emphasized in the liturgy of the feast of the Mediatrix of All Graces, both in the Office and in the Mass. Entirely characteristic of the spirit of the feast is the collect of the Mass: "Lord Jesus Christ, our Mediator with the Father, Thou who hast made the most blessed Virgin Thy Mother to be also our Mother and our Mediatrix with Thee; grant that whosoever comes to Thee to beg Thy benefits may rejoice in receiving all through her. Who livest and reignest with God the Father in unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen."

Furthermore this intercessory mediation of the Blessed Lady with her divine Son is so universal and necessary, in

accordance with God's wish, that none of the saints can approach our Lord, none can get a hearing, so to speak, except through the intervention of His Mother. This fact was strikingly emphasized by Pope Benedict XV at the time of the canonization of St. Joan of Arc. A woman named Theresa Belin, who had a malignant disease, had been invoking the help of Blessed Joan. In answer to her prayers the woman was cured perfectly and instantaneously, but at Lourdes. The miracle was presented as one of the two required for the cause of canonization of a blessed. But the Promoter of the Faith, familiarly known as the devil's advocate, objected that since the miracle was worked at Lourdes it was granted not through the intercession of Joan of Arc but through that of the Blessed Mother of God. His Holiness the Pope answered this objection by saying that it made no difference that the miracle asked in the name of the Blessed Joan was performed at Lourdes, because all graces and gifts bestowed through the mediation of a saint or a blessed must come to us through Mary anyhow. For she, said the Holy Father, is the one whom the Fathers of the Church have called the "mediatrix of all mediators."

But if Mary's influence must always be brought to bear on her Son by her prayers for us, all prayer to St. Joseph and the other saints as well as to the Holy Angels would seem to be superfluous. Why not pray to the Blessed Virgin alone, all the more so since her intercession is, as we have said, an essential prerequisite for the obtaining of any favor whatsoever from Almighty God? We answer simply that sometimes God wishes to grant us a favor through the prayers of one of His saints. That does not exclude the part that Mary must play and will play in presenting the request of our patron to her divine Son, even though we do not direct our petition to her expressly.

But may we not go the Sacred Heart directly without

stopping to ask His Mother's aid? Of course we may. Nevertheless our Lord does not answer our prayers except, so to speak, on a word from her. It is not merely when we pray to Mary that her intercession is required. No prayer to God or to His saints and angels ever gets a hearing at the throne of Infinite Majesty unless offered for us by the Queen of Heaven herself. And for that very reason many spiritual writers have spoken of Mary's intercessory power as "suppliant omnipotence."

If all that we have said is true, perhaps it will be asked, is not the Blessed Mother very much occupied with the almost infinite number of prayers that go up to Heaven from the millions of human minds and hearts? How can she know them all and how is it possible for her to transmit all these petitions to the throne of grace? Any such difficulty can only arise from a false imagining of the reality. For our Lady is now in the enjoyment of the vision of God and that to a degree of perfection which is surpassed only by the marvelous vision in the human mind of the Son of God Himself. In that blessed vision as in a mirror Mary sees at a glance every need and every act of prayer of every member of the Mystical Body of Christ and of every human being. And her prayer for us corresponds to that one continuous uninterrupted act of vision. It also is one, all-inclusive, continuous, not divided into parts nor passing from one point to another. With one prayer she prays for all simultaneously, but for each one distinctly. Truly is she called, for so she is in truth, *Mater admirabilis*, Mother most wonderful.

### *Universal Dispenser*

The mediation of our Lady involves also, as we have said, her office of dispenser or distributor of all graces. This function flows as a consequence from her universal interces-



sion and her universal merits, understood in the way we have explained. No favor comes to us from God except through her hands. For that reason she has been called the almoner of God, the treasurer of His graces, the aqueduct through which all the waters of God's supernatural bounty flow out into the world of men.

There are theologians who conceive of Mary's distributing or dispensing activity as that of a physical instrument in the hands of God. According to this view the Blessed Virgin's function would be somewhat similar to that of a priest or a sacrament in the production of habitual grace. Now this opinion has against it the authority of great theologians like St. Thomas and Suarez, and it is not supported by very solid reasons. Hence it does not seem very probable. Sanctifying grace caused by the sacraments in us does not come from our Lady directly. Rather she dispenses to us the actual graces which lead us to the reception of the sacraments and prepare us worthily for them. Only in that way is she the source of habitual sacramental grace. Nor is it easy to conceive of her as the instrument by which the special movements of the Holy Spirit, which we call actual graces, are produced in our mind and will.

How then does Mary dispense God's grace to us? Most theologians say that she *dispenses by interceding*, so that there is not a complete difference between her activity as intercessor and her activity as dispenser of divine favors. But her intercession has a special character because of which it can rightly be called an act of distribution. If you ask what that characteristic is, we reply that such is the attitude of our divine Lord, Mary's Son, towards His well-beloved Mother that He looks upon her every request as though it were a command. Hence for her to ask a favor is the same as to designate its recipient. Our Lord never refuses her prayer. He has determined never to do so, and in that sense



He cannot do so. In heaven Mary's wish always prevails. Hence too it may be said that her intercession is infallible. It never fails. Therefore it is that in the Office of the feast of Mary's Mediation the Church puts into our Lord's mouth the words of King Solomon to his mother Bethsabee: "My mother, ask; for I must not turn away thy face." In the miracle at the wedding banquet in Cana we have an instance of the characteristic efficacy of Mary's intercession. The Blessed Mother merely pointed out the shortage of wine. This indication of her wish was to Jesus as good as a command. He worked forthwith His first great miracle. And so it is for us. Our heavenly Mother has but to indicate our wants to the Son of God. It is by securing His compliance that Mary distributes His graces and favors.

### *Religious and Mary Mediatrix*

Surely religious have every reason to love our Lady and to confide in her. They owe to her their membership in the Mystical Body of Christ, the Catholic Church. That their place in that Body is a special one was indicated by our present Holy Father in his beautiful encyclical on the Mystical Body. That privileged place is due to their religious vocation, and this is one of Mary's choicest gifts. Fervor in that vocation and perseverance in it as well as in God's friendship to the end of life are the supreme graces which Christ's Mother will infallibly obtain for every religious who prays to her for them earnestly and assiduously.

Mary is Queen of Heaven and Mother of Divine Grace. She is our Queen and Mother because she is Mediatrix of all graces. She is Queen mainly because under her divine Son she has sovereign dominion in the administration of the supernatural benefits of God's kingdom. She is Mother because by her love she cooperated in our spiritual rebirth, especially when on Calvary she shared in our Lord's suf-

THOMAS J. MOTHERWAY

ferings in the way that was hers as Coredemptrix. She continues to be our Mother by her part in the nourishing and growth of the life of Christ within us. Now the dedication which her queenship demands of every Christian, and the love which her motherhood inspires should surely be found living and real in the soul of every religious. And that love and consecration will be nourished above all by the trust that comes from a deep appreciation of the sublime prerogatives of her mediation between us and her divine Son.

It is the truth we have been explaining that has inspired many religious to add to their consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus an act of complete consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen and Mother of all graces. In that act they place entirely at her disposal the intercessory and satisfactory value of all their works, sufferings, and prayers, uniting it with hers and making it available for any member of Christ's Mystical Body or any human being whom she may see fit to assist. Such a generous and in some ways heroic offering cannot fail to bring as its reward the special protection and favor of the Mother of love and mercy.

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## The Holy Shroud of Christ

Clement J. McNaspy, S.J.

**I**T MAY BE that you are not an amateur photographer; few religious are. But if you are, or have been, then you should be greatly pleased to know that it was an amateur photographer who took the most talked of, the most written about, probably the most important picture ever taken. His name was Secondo Pia, an Italian, by profession a lawyer. Back toward the end of the last century, when photography was the novelty that television is today, Pia was president of a society of amateurs. He would probably never have become known outside of Italy were it not for this one picture which catapulted him into fame.

In 1898 Signor Pia decided that it was time for someone to photograph a relic venerated in the city of Turin. This relic, known as the "*Santa Sindone*" ("Holy Shroud"), had been in Turin for many centuries, where pious folk revered it as the burial shroud of Our Lord. Several times a century it was publicly exposed with elaborate ritual. Copies of the relic had been painted; and they showed rather vaguely the figure of a man with wounds in head, hands, feet, and side; yet even the most ardent devotees could hardly say that this figure appeared impressive to the eye. Photography had been known for less than a century, and up to this time no one had photographed the relic.

It required a good deal of diplomatic maneuvering and persuasion for Pia to secure the needed permission. To begin with, the Shroud belonged, not to the Church, but to the Royal House of Italy. It was kept in an ornate silver reliquary in a special chapel adjoining the Turin Cathedral, and the traditional process of exposing the relic allowed for nothing like photography. Moreover, it would be hard to

take a picture of a relic exposed over the altar, particularly with rather imperfect lighting. But Signor Pia was determined, and at last he received the royal permission.

Rather clumsy scaffolding was erected, and the lighting problem was solved as well as could be. Carefully Signor Pia made his exposure and brought his plates to the dark room for development. As this was the first photograph of the Shroud ever taken, he was a bit excited. All went well until the negative began to come clearly into view. Was he seeing things? Were his nerves too highly strung? Shaking with astonishment Signor Pia actually found it hard to finish the process of development.

What had happened in that dark room was to become known the world over. The mysterious Shroud of Turin, which tradition had held to be the burial shroud of Christ, proved to be itself a *negative*. Everyone knows what a photographic negative is, and that when one takes a negative of what is already a negative the result is a positive. What had happened was this: Signor Pia's negative of the Shroud turned out, quite unexpectedly, to be the positive of a man. A complete reversal had taken place: what was dark on the Shroud became light on the photographic plate, and what was light on the Shroud became dark. It was, actually, just as though the Shroud had been a huge photographic negative for all these centuries; and no one knew about it until today.

The discovery, of course, startled the world. That a piece of cloth with unimpressive stains on it, clearly many hundreds of years old, should turn out to be the equivalent of a photographic negative was something to shock even the least scientifically minded. Photography was a new thing, the discovery of the great nineteenth century, and this cloth was many centuries old. But what made the fact stupendous was that the face on the Shroud was now, for

the first time, shown to be deeply majestic, sad and buffeted, yet placid and sacred. It was the face of someone dead, tortured to death; yet it seemed to contain an unseen life that thwarted death itself.

There was no doubt as to Whose image and likeness this was. Almost overnight the European press was thrown into a flurry. Enthusiasts hailed the discovery as the greatest of all time. Debunkers condemned it as a vast hoax, a shameful perpetration of clerics. The learned Catholic world was confused and divided: "*Could this be true? Wasn't it too good to be true?*" This nineteenth century had been so devoted to irreligion and unbelief that it seemed incredible that Our Lord could postpone so great a discovery to this time. Thus we find learned Catholics opposed to the Shroud (that is, holding that it was not the true shroud of Christ), and we find other learned Catholics convinced that it was genuinely what it seemed to be.

Within five years more than three thousand articles and books had been provoked by Signor Pia's photograph. A great part of this literature was regrettably bitter, not to say discourteous. Some opponents accused Signor Pia of monstrous bad faith. Even among Catholics the controversy shuttled back and forth. As is usual in disputes, neither side seemed to examine or appraise the arguments of the other side; and some of those who wrote against the Shroud had never taken the trouble to examine Pia's photographs.

In the main those opposed to the Shroud's genuinity were historians. One of the Church's chief historians, Canon Ulysse Chevalier, became identified as the leader of the opposition. He had spent some time gathering up all the documents he could find about the Turin Shroud and its history. While its history was clear back to the middle of the fourteenth century, it was obscure beyond that date.

To make matters worse, he found that a French bishop of that period had had a serious dispute with the canons who then owned the Shroud. In something of a fury the bishop had written to Antipope Clement VII (then generally recognized in France as pope), and objected to the way the canons revered the Shroud, allowing it more devotion than the Blessed Sacrament, and using it as a means of making money. The scandal was, he urged, that the Shroud was really not Christ's burial shroud, but only a painting. Someone had confessed to an earlier bishop that he had painted it.

This document, in addition to the long period of obscurity before the fourteenth century, satisfied Canon Chevalier that the Turin Shroud must not be the Shroud of Christ. He published his findings; and, because of his high standing among historians, he was thought to have closed the case. Apparently no one adverted to the fact that the document on which he relied was suspicious by reason of its tone; that it was contradicted by several other documents, including three official statements of the bishop's successor; that it had no strict corroboration; that it did not even name the alleged painter; and that in spite of this document the Shroud continued to be recognized as genuine even by early scholars who had known the document.

Meanwhile several scientists took a more satisfactory approach; they began to study the Shroud itself as it appeared under photography. Dr. Paul Vignon, biologist, and Colonel Colson, physicist, both of Paris, conducted a series of experiments that convinced them that the stains on the Shroud were not at all painted, but were the result of natural causes, not artificial. These scientists discovered that a cloth covered with aloes would become stained if it were kept very close to a body covered with the acid contained in perspiration. Aloes had been used in Christ's

burial, we learn from St. John's Gospel; and Our Lord's body must have been covered with dried up perspiration. The stains produced in their experiments were like those seen on the Shroud.

Other scientists became interested too, and we find Dr. Yves Delage, noted physiologist at the University of Paris and an avowed unbeliever, publicly pronouncing in favor of the Shroud's genuinity. To his colleagues he insisted: "I have remained faithful to the true spirit of science. I sought only to discover the truth, remaining indifferent whether it would serve one religious faction or another." At the Academy of Sciences he stated: "It is Christ who impressed himself on the Shroud. And if it be not Christ, who should it be? A condemned man, tortured in the same manner as Christ? But, then, how explain the expression of majesty on this face?" And replying to certain irreligious friends who objected to his "selling out to religion," he retorted: "If it were the image of one of the Pharaohs (and not of Christ), no one would have any criticism to offer."

All this happened toward the end of the century. Then for some thirty years the discussion subsided while Dr. Vignon and other scientists continued their researches. More and more clearly they saw arguments in favor of the Shroud's genuinity; yet they realized that more photographs were needed—larger, detailed ones. In 1931 permission was finally granted for a new exposition of the Shroud, and many scientists gathered for a close inspection. Since the images on the Shroud are equivalently a negative, and since modern photography can bring out even more than the unaided eye, the most important phase of this inspection was to be the production of several new photographs.

By this time Signor Pia was well along in years, and it



was decided to select a professional photographer who should have all modern methods and equipment at his disposal. Cavaliere Giuseppe Enrie, a recognized expert, was chosen; and on May 3, 1931, the new photographs were taken. At 10:30 that night the chapel of exposition was closed to the general public; nothing should be allowed to interfere with the perfect execution of this task. A large group of scientists, high ecclesiastics, and members of the Royal Family were present for the official photography.

Reverently the relic was lowered to the position that Enrie had selected for best results. The glass was removed, and Cardinal Fossati, Archbishop of Turin and a close student of the Shroud, personally helped to straighten the cloth for the picture. Sixteen thousand candlepower lighting had been arranged. Enrie was satisfied with arrangements and took all the exposures he wished: some of the Shroud as a whole; others of detailed sections, particularly of the face. Plates of various sizes and sensitivities were used. When the work was completed, Enrie, together with Dr. Vignon, Signor Pia, and other scientists, entered the dark room set up in the sacristy. Their work took a number of hours, and it was almost dawn when the negatives were completed.

That morning, May 4, Enrie visited Cardinal Fossati to present him with the results. The photography had been so successful that, when Cardinal Fossati saw the negative of the face, he received it on his knees, kissing it and thanking God for this great consolation. Immediately the Cardinal telephoned the Prince of Piedmont to report on the complete success of the new photography. Affidavits were drawn up by notaries, and the whole question of the Shroud of Turin was now completely beyond suspicion. The new photography had vindicated and verified Signor Pia's early work, with all the advantages of modern appa-



ratus and techniques.

In 1933 a new exposition was granted at the Pope's special request, and it was on March 21 of the following year that Cavaliere Enrie was given a special audience at the Vatican. Cardinal Verdier of Paris arranged for the audience; Cardinal Fossati of Turin made the introduction. The Hall of Tronetto was selected; the time set for ten o'clock in the morning. Before the Holy Father entered, Enrie arranged the main photograph to best advantage so that the Holy Father should see it as he entered the hall. The Pope was obviously deeply impressed, examining the photograph minutely, and discussing details with great interest. He reminded Enrie that he had personally studied the question, and thought highly of the apologetic purposes to which it could now be put. Before leaving the Hall, the Holy Father personally conferred on Enrie the gold medal of the holy year.

Two years later at a public audience to more than a thousand Catholic Action young men, Pope Pius distributed small copies of the Shroud negative, alluding to them as "pictures of Christ . . . the most beautiful, most suggestive, most precious that one can imagine." He called the Shroud of Turin "certainly more sacred than perhaps any other" object, and stated that it was now clearly established in the most positive and scientific manner.

Evidently it is impossible here to repeat the complex arguments in favor of the Shroud. While most of the scholarly work has appeared in European periodicals, some reading is accessible in English. The *Scientific American* for March, 1937, contains a very important article on the scientific aspects of the question; this was later reprinted in the *Readers' Digest*. The *American Ecclesiastical Review* contains two excellent articles in the 1935 and 1940 volumes. These articles are all written by Father Edward A.

Wuenschel, C.Ss.R., foremost American authority on the subject. The present writer has attempted to survey the current state of the question in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, April, 1945. The reader is referred to this article for documentation.

Here we may only sketch the general line of argument. Examining the Shroud itself we discover that it is not a painting of any sort. This has been definitely established by the groups of competent scientists who have scrutinized it in recent years. The very perfection of the anatomy is proof that it could not have been painted at the period when we know it already existed. Even today, in fact, qualified artists using modern skills and devices have not been able to copy the Shroud so faithfully that when photographed the copies would look at all convincing. Still less can anyone paint in such a way that the negative of the painting will look like a positive under photography. And we must remember that all this would have had to happen before the great age of painting and before the discovery of photography! Moreover, any painting technique, when examined closely, especially under photographic enlargement, leaves clear traces of painting. On the other hand, the Shroud is clearly devoid of any such indications. This means that it must have been formed by some method other than painting.

The other choice is that it was formed by contact with a body (or perhaps a statue) prepared for that purpose. This could be accidental or intentional. Yet even the opponents of the Shroud admit that if it is not Christ's shroud, then it is surely not an accidental resemblance of it. There are too many coincidences with the Gospel account of the Passion for that to be thinkable: for instance, the head, hand, and foot wounds; the side pierced with a lance; the evidence of a cross having been carried; the scourging. Hence

no one has recourse to the accidental resemblance hypothesis.

This would mean that it is either Christ's Shroud, or that it is a forgery caused by contact with some other body (or statue). Against this we find a striking convergence of arguments: the forger would have to find a remarkably beautiful and perfect body, with clear Jewish features; then he would have to know various facts about crucifixion that science has discovered only recently (for instance, that the hand wounds would really have to be in the wrist, where the Shroud indicates); the forger would have to have done his entire job with such skill and knowledge of anatomy as to deceive scientists that have spent years studying the Shroud. Many other reasons can be urged against this theory, and yet more against a theory that a statue had been used. Hence the opponents of the Shroud today either avoid the question altogether or suggest that it may be a painting after all, failing to realize how unanswerable are the arguments against the painting hypothesis.

Thus we seem forced to hold that it is the burial Shroud of Christ, and that the images on the Shroud are images of Christ. True, history has not yet been able to bridge satisfactorily the long gap between the first and fourteenth centuries; yet the fact remains that we have a Shroud that cannot have been produced artificially (least of all before modern times), a Shroud clearly belonging to someone who was crucified, scourged, crowned with thorns, pierced in the side, hurriedly buried yet wrapped in an expensive cloth with aloes, and who mysteriously left the Shroud before corruption could set in. All of this agrees with what the Gospels tell us about Our Lord, and no one else has ever been known to whom all this could apply at the same time.

At the outbreak of the war two large commissions of

scholars had for some years been doing research on the question. Convinced that the arguments in favor of the Shroud's genuinity were decisive, these men were devoting their studies to details of the early history, on how the images were produced, and allied problems. Among them are some of the eminent minds of the Church: Cardinals Baudrillart, Verdier, Fossati; Bishop d'Herbigny; Fathers Gemelli, d'Ales, Gaetani, Vaccari. Among them are specialists in theology, scripture, medicine, physiology, chemistry, archaeology, history, and other sciences. The complete list, in fact, reads like a *Who's Who* among Catholic intellectuals.

A noteworthy fact, however, is that not only Christians but unbelievers also have pronounced in favor of the Shroud. Earlier we mentioned Dr. Yves Delage, who always insisted that he had no religion, but was convinced that the Turin Shroud was the shroud of Christ. Among contemporary students of the question, Dr. Henri Terquem created something of a sensation when he presented to the Dunkerque Society for the Encouragement of Science, Arts and Letters his conclusions after many years of study. Dr. Terquem states forcefully that he has no religion and utterly no religious interest in the Shroud. He has treated it simply as any other legal case, he himself being a specialist in legal medicine. His conclusions, after a rigorous study of the data available, are that the Shroud can only be that of Christ. His study, reprinted in book form, has recently been crowned by the French Academy.

Most impressive to those who have studied the Shroud closely is the image itself—particularly that of the face as it appears in the life size negative. To use the words of two men competent in the criticism of art: "In that image we see the majesty of the God-man . . . There is something overwhelming in those closed eyes, in that masterful counte-

nance which seems to bear the impress of eternity." And now "at last we may gaze upon the face of the Martyr God as it looked when He was interred, and prostrate ourselves before it to admire or to worship." Indeed it would seem, as a recent pontiff has suggested, that Providence has reserved this amazing discovery for our own times as a spur to our faith and love of Christ Jesus.

## *Decisions of the Holy See*

April 30, 1944: The Sacred Congregation of Rites decreed that it was safe to proceed to the canonization of Bl. Michael Garicoits, founder of the Society of Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Bétharram. In the introductory paragraphs of the decree, the Sacred Congregation called attention to the fact that the spiritual condition of France at the beginning of the nineteenth century was so deplorable that human wisdom could think of no remedy. But God gave His own remedy—great saints, who by means of lives of outstanding virtue and tremendous apostolic labors built a new foundation for Christian piety.

*Ten years ago* (in May, 1935) Pius XI solemnly canonized John Fisher and Thomas More. In his homily on the occasion, the Pope prayed fervently that England would return to the unity of the faith.

*Twenty years ago* (in May of the Jubilee Year, 1925) the solemn honor of canonization was granted to Theresa of the Child Jesus, Peter Canisius, Mary Magdalene Postel, Madeleine Sophie Barat, John Baptist Mary Vianney, and John Eudes. In his homily at the Little Flower's canonization, Pius XI prayed that the faithful would embrace her "spiritual childhood," namely that through virtuous discipline they would acquire and retain the simplicity of soul that is natural to a child. In Peter Canisius, he found a call to unity and peace; in the Curé of Ars, a model for pastors of souls; in John Eudes, a lesson for preachers: namely, to strive for that eloquence which does not merely delight the ear, but which wins souls to Christ. In the apostolate of Mary Magdalene Postel and Madeleine Sophie Barat, the Pope saw a great inspiration for young women to cultivate virtuous lives and thus be instruments for the salvation of mankind rather than for its destruction.

## Religious Appreciation of the Spiritual Director's Stewardship

Leo M. Krenz, S.J.

**"**WOULD let you know what manner of care I have for you [Colossians, Laodiceans, and all others], that your hearts may be comforted, being instructed in charity and unto all riches of fullness of understanding, unto the knowledge of the mystery of God the Father and of Christ Jesus."

"As therefore you have received Jesus Christ the Lord, walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2: 1-7 *passim*).

For you "I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you" (Galatians 4: 19).

"I charge thee, Timothy, before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead [I charge thee] by His coming and His Kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desire will heap to themselves teachers [they like]; having itching ears [to hear what they themselves desire], and will indeed turn their hearing away from the truth to fables."

"But be thou vigilant; labor in all things [of duty]; do the work of an evangelist; fulfill thy ministry" (II Timothy 4: 1-5).

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In these terse expressions St. Paul reveals to us the high ideals he set for himself as a director of Christian souls, and the means and methods he used in order to derive the best

possible results from direction, both individual and social. Furthermore, he presses upon other directors—beginning with Timothy, his cherished pupil and disciple—the adoption of the same ideals and standards if they would fill their exalted and responsible director-office according to the mind and heart of Christ Jesus, who redeemed the world of human souls with the infinite price of His Precious Blood.

We must not fail to note that St. Paul's lofty ideals of Christian aiming and striving were proposed even to secular persons, the multitudes of his converts from Judaism and paganism. It should be easy, then, for us to read out of the clear declaration of the Apostle his mind and heart regarding the direction he would have religious long for and expect and welcome from their spiritual directors—truly orthodox direction: distinctly religious, definitely institutional, and pointedly individual.

### *I. Distinctly Religious Direction*

Our Heavenly Father Himself, through His Eternal Son made man, has taught us the sharp specific difference between a good Christian life aimed at salvation through the observance of the Commandments, and a substantially higher Christian life consecrated to the pursuit of perfection through the observance of the evangelical counsels (Matthew 19: 16-21).

In the light of this divine revelation we as religious should expect our spiritual director to esteem our vocation even as Christ Jesus' personal call to us, "Come! . . . Follow Me!" He must appreciate the director-office in our regard as his inviolable promise to be to us like an angel-guardian and to guide us in our ascent of the mountain of perfection, especially when the road by which our heavenly Father would have us travel is rough, or steep and slippery, or frighteningly dangerous and perplexing.



In the light of the same revelation, the director is entitled to presume that we on our part are resolved to live out our solemn covenant to be religious, truly, always, and everywhere; that when we have recourse to him, we want distinctly religious direction, suited to help us and hold us to the correct understanding and keen appreciation of the purpose and nature of our divine vocation and to the full acceptance of its sacred duties and high responsibilities. He can expect us to be willing to rid ourselves of any worldly notions that we had when coming to religion and to give evidence of our determination to be transformed into spiritual persons. He can presume that we want to be good religious; that we want to make our life—in the height of its ideals and the calibre of its virtues and in the energy of its efforts—the proof of an earnest will to go beyond all that would be demanded of us if we were still “in the world,” even so far beyond this as to make it our ruling aim and passion to grow in that detachment and humility and charity which Jesus Himself calls “perfection.” In short, the director has a right to expect that we habitually strive to make our whole external conduct and interior life a worthy response to that gracious invitation which even now comes to us from the Heart of Jesus every day, ever clearer and ever more loving and more pressing, “Come! Follow Me more closely!”

Hence imagine the disappointment of a conscientious spiritual director should he find persons in religion who entertain views of Christian perfection and of religious direction which are little less than caricatures of his own high ideals. To their way of thinking, the pursuit of perfection expected of them is quite easily compatible with the free indulgence of their pet worldly and even venially sinful habits of thought, desire, speech, and conduct, provided only that they take the necessary precautions to preserve



their souls from mortal sin. The director knows that such views not only threaten to foredoom his best efforts to failure but their own souls to defeat in the battle which all religious must wage for the higher merit open to them and the special glorification of God destined for them.

Try to realize the shock that such religious give to their director when they make it clear to him that no distinctly religious direction is wanted or at all acceptable. Whenever he begins to insist upon a more honest will and a more energetic effort to break away from some long-cherished indulgence, they at once manifest their displeasure. Theirs is a spirit of self-love and independence which gives unmistakable proof of a settled will to continue in their aimless wanderings in the lowlands far from the foot of the "Mount of Perfection." With such religious the director feels constrained to abandon all hope of bringing them to anything higher than the easier practices of self-denial and virtue generally recommended even to secular penitents. For every aspiration beyond this, he can only leave them to their own blind conceits (Jeremias 6: 16, 17).

## II. *Definitely Institutional Direction*

As a matter of fact we are not only *religious* but *religious of a particular institute* that has an approved specific purpose and nature and a corresponding definite rule and spirit. Accordingly, the stewardship of the spiritual director obliges him to be earnest in his efforts to help us pursue conscientiously that distinctive perfection of Christlike charity, obedience, and humility to which our own solemn profession has consecrated our lives and to which our institute is dedicating and prompting us anew every day. His office and his consequent rights, too, are those of a recognized counselor. As such he offers his benevolent services to instruct, guide, and hearten us in our efforts to acquire

solid virtue and the qualities of character required if we are to enjoy a healthy growth toward that degree of Christlikeness for which we profess to be striving.

Of course, in executing this high office, no understanding director expects us religious to have reached a degree of Christlike perfection which habitually disposes of every temptation (e.g., to vanity, ambition, sensuality, envy, anger, spiritual sloth, etc.) in the best possible religious fashion. However, he should be able to presume that we will not ordinarily trouble him with those petty trials or humiliations which are simply unavoidable in community life. Finally, he can reasonably expect that we will never appeal to him in a spirit of childish self-pity or haughty rebelliousness, nor with the intention or hope of being encouraged or supported in an attitude or disposition at odds with the rule and spirit of our institute.

However, this does not mean that for good religious there can never be valid reasons for carrying grievances to the spiritual director even for the purpose of obtaining justice or relief. Unfortunately, one anti-social member may make life intolerably miserable for a whole community; and indeed it is not impossible for a superior to be unkind, or too rigorous, or even offensively autocratic in commanding, judging, correcting, or punishing. Hence, the Church herself makes ample provision for respectful appeals to higher superiors. If need be, appeal may be made even to the Sacred Congregation of Religious, the authorized agent of our Holy Father who is the "sovereign religious superior" over every religious institute and all its members including its highest superiors.

Canonically, therefore, under pressure of extraordinary circumstances, a director may prudently advise an appeal. If the matter is sufficiently urgent, he should make certain that the appeal reaches the higher authority—possibly by

personally bringing the case to the knowledge of the proper higher judge or by placing the affidavit of the plaintiff in his hands. Obviously, if it ever becomes necessary to resort to such extreme measures, the director in no way incurs the guilt either of arbitrary interference with any institutional authority or of unwarranted invasion of its rights. On the contrary he deserves the gratitude of the institute for his defense of its chartered rights against grave abuse of power or usurpation of it on the part of a disobedient and disloyal member.

However, it would be a mistake to consider the spiritual director as a religious superior, especially to look upon his office as a quasi-canonical institution to enable one to get away from some peculiarly chafing or unwelcome injunction of institutional superiors. Every religious should clearly understand that commands, permissions, dispensations, and exceptions in matters within the domain of religious vows or rule can come only from a properly constituted religious superior. Now, no spiritual director is in any sense a religious superior, much less a sort of super-superior with religious jurisdiction over regular institutional superiors except in the rare case when he has been appointed "canonical visitor" and has received the extraordinary faculties usually attached to that office. Therefore (except in the case just mentioned) any permission or dispensation in matters of religious rule or custom or domestic government which a director might be induced to grant independently of the authority and will of religious superiors, or even contrary to that authority, would be illicit and invalid.

### III. *Pointedly Individual Direction*

Religious are human beings. As such they are subject to all the tendencies of our fallen nature: pride, vanity,

ambition, envy, jealousy, spiritual sloth, etc. These tendencies are not exhibited in the same way in every individual. Even among religious who have received the same religious education and training, they manifest themselves in various ways. It follows, then, that it is not sufficient for the director merely to consider the needs of religious in general or only the specific needs of the particular religious group for which he is prescribing. He must also adapt his direction to the needs of each individual. If it is to be truly effective, he must make it eminently and even pointedly individual. If he does not, his spiritual remedies will fail to bring about a cure of peculiar individual spiritual ailments.

However, it must be evident that no religious can reasonably expect to profit by the spiritual father's direction except by cooperating with him precisely in his capacity of physician prescribing for individual needs. The religious who sincerely desires with the aid of the director to bring his soul to a state of vigorous spiritual health, or to restore it to the vigorous health it once enjoyed, must welcome such direction (or at least accept it) especially when it squarely meets peculiar individual needs. This is true most of all when his prescriptions are unwelcome to sensual or selfish nature even though the regime to which he subjects the religious, or the "surgical operation" he deems necessary, is decidedly painful and humiliating to spiritual pride.

The spiritual director should be able to take it for granted that professed religious are making the distinctly religious and definitely institutional pursuit of Christ-likeness, at least to a fair degree, the outstanding motive and goal of their whole life in religion. He should expect them to cooperate gladly with his energetic efforts to help them to an honest and persevering pursuit of the high degree of poverty, purity, obedience, humility, and charity

which by their very name and habit they profess to practice.

All this being presupposed, we can readily understand what a perplexing problem is presented to the director by a religious who assures him of his or her daily and "scrupulous" recital of the formula of the "Holy Vows" and of the "Religious Morning Offering," yet persists in refusing to allow him to make his direction pointedly individual. The problem becomes all the more difficult if the whole conversation and bearing of such a religious—and perhaps his eloquent silence and clever omissions—give evident proof that instead of growing in perfection or even pursuing it at all honestly, he or she is becoming less humble, less obedient, and less charitable. Such a religious sets arbitrary limits to the interpretation and especially to the application of our Christian and religious code of morality. To companions and superiors he applies the precepts and counsels and expectations of Christ Jesus in their fullest rigor; while to himself he applies altogether different, lower, and easier standards—perhaps even to the extent of turning habitual transgressions and omissions into virtues, the evidences of an outstandingly heroic religious spirit and life! Even the most zealous director can do nothing for religious of this kind until they give evidence of remorse for all the ways and times they may have obstructed or refused the pointedly individual direction offered to them.

The tendency to set one standard for others, especially for superiors, and quite another and easier standard for self is found to a greater or less degree in most people, including religious. It is one of those tendencies which must be sternly checked by the soul that earnestly desires to make real progress. For until the soul begins with a will to correct and reform, not companions and superiors, but self; until the soul directs searching self-examination and earnest meditation to bring self to long for, to welcome, and to

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follow out substantially the accurately pointed individual direction that it needs, it will profit little or not at all by the advice and guidance of even the holiest and wisest directors.

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All of us then may well pray more humbly and work more earnestly for the light, the inspiration, and the religious good will we need to prove to our spiritual director that the encouragement we seek is not at all such as would come from an unwarranted assurance that we are doing enough but only such as will nerve and hearten us to permit and to invite him to do his utmost to help us:

"To put on Christ."—yes;

"To be transformed into Christ," and never to fail deliberately nor even to falter at all cowardly,

"Until Christ is formed in us!"

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## The Promises of the Sacred Heart

Lawrence D. Kelly, S.J.

**T**HE rainbow in all its splendor is but a slight reflection of the infinite beauty of God. Before the Deluge it was a natural phenomenon the sons of Adam loved to behold. After the Deluge, however, it took on a new meaning. God had made a promise to Noah that He would never again send a flood to destroy the earth and its inhabitants. The rainbow was to be the divine seal upon this covenant.

"And God said, this is the sign of the covenant which I give between me and you, and to every living soul, for perpetual generations. I will set my bow in the clouds, and I shall see it and shall remember the everlasting covenant that was made between God and every living soul" (Genesis 9:12-17).

As we stand admiring the beauty of the rainbow, we are reminded of God's mercy to sinful man. We are reminded, too, of the promises He made to Noah. Our thoughts move forward to the many promises made by Our Lord during His life among men. The Beatitudes alone are rich in promised blessings.

It was not until the 17th century, however, at the Visitation Convent in Paray-le-Monial, France, that we were introduced for the first time to Sister (now Saint) Margaret Mary Alacoque and the rich promises of the Sacred Heart. To this humble nun was entrusted the task of promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Since then the Sacred Heart of the Divine Master has spread its

influence throughout the world and drawn countless souls closer to Christ.

In this richly endowed devotion we center our attention upon the Heart of Jesus. The heart has been chosen as the symbol of this devotion because it is associated, at least symbolically, with that whole set of ideas which give meaning to the spiritual life of a Catholic. The heart connotes to him the human and divine affection, noble generosity, and love that understands and sympathizes and helps because it understands. In a word, the whole bright revelation of the beauty and loveliness of Our Lord's character is brought to focus in devotion to His Sacred Heart.

The more familiar we become with this devotion, the more significant become those two simple words: "Sacred Heart." They convey to our minds all that we have said above of the beautiful virtues of the Heart of Christ. We should offer a prayer of thanks to the Holy Ghost for His guidance and a sincere "Thank you!" to Mother Church for her wisdom in giving us that short sweet term which means so much to us. Yes! the Sacred Heart means to us Jesus; Jesus who loves and understands us, loves us not only with a divine love, but with a human heart and a human sympathy.

From the writings and letters of St. Margaret Mary to her superiors, spiritual director, and others, theologians have singled out for special attention various promises which Our Lord made to her. As we have them today, these promises number twelve.

Their variety is a thing to be noted. It far surpasses that of any other devotion in the Church. The fervent, the tepid, the sinful, whether priest, religious, or layman, are promised relief in affliction, consolation in sorrow, peace of soul in time of trouble, and rich blessings on their daily work. To the priest in particular is offered the power



of moving the most hardened hearts. To the sinner is promised forgiveness; to the tepid, strength and courage; to holy souls, high sanctity; to everyone, final perseverance and a happy death. Even the omnipotent and boundless love and goodness of the Sacred Heart can bestow few favors greater or more valuable than these.

A few simple thoughts on each of the promises will recall to our minds the rich blessings which they hold out to those who take advantage of them.

I Will Give Them All the Graces Necessary in Their State of Life  
(First Promise)

As religious we have consecrated ourselves to the more perfect service of God. Certain graces beyond those needed by all men are necessary for the perfect fulfillment of our high calling. To everyone this promise offers the grace to persevere in his or her holy vocation. To superiors are promised the graces of governing their community with patience, tact, kindness, and consideration. Humility and faith in accepting decisions of superiors, prudence and a spirit of mortification are offered to subjects. Priests, whether at the altar, in the confessional, or ministering to the flock, must mirror forth the virtues of the Heart of Christ. To everyone practicing devotion to the Sacred Heart, priest, religious, and layman, are offered the graces necessary in his state of life. These necessary graces and countless other helpful graces the Sacred Heart offers to those who love Him.

I Will Establish Peace in Their Houses  
(Second Promise)

"Peace," says St. Augustine, "is serenity of mind, tranquillity of soul, simplicity of heart, the bond of charity." The peace which the Sacred Heart here promises is not the shallow, short-lived respite from worry which the world calls peace. It is, rather, an interior restfulness of soul, a

sense of security and confidence arising from a realization of that text: "If God is for us, who shall be against us?" (Romans 8:31). Surely there is no virtue the Sacred Heart is more ready to shower upon us in these troubled times than that genuine peace of soul which the world cannot give. Harmony, esteem, mutual affection must characterize the community of which Christ is a member, must dwell in the hearts over which He is Lord.

I Will Comfort Them in All Their Afflictions  
(Third Promise)

Christianity is summed up in the cross, and the cross symbolizes suffering. No one desirous of following Christ can possibly be blinded to the fact that the road leads to Calvary. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34). Those afflictions in which the Sacred Heart promises Its comfort constitute our daily cross. They arise from various sources: our superiors, our companions, ourselves, our health, our employment, our surroundings. Suffering of any kind, whether mental or physical, has always received a generous and loving response from the sympathetic Heart of Christ. Suffering has always been the "open sesame" to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. From Its open side flows an unending stream of comfort and consolation.

I Will Be Their Secure Refuge During Life, and Above All in Death  
(Fourth Promise)

A secure refuge indeed! And one that is always open. One may without difficulty hasten to the Heart of Christ for comfort and protection from the dangers that threaten. In life the Heart of Christ is a refuge against ourselves, i.e., from the domestic enemy within that strives to bring about our spiritual ruin. In this divine refuge we find strength to counteract our human frailty, courage to overcome our inconstancy, generous love to serve our Master and Lord.

The Sacred Heart is a secure refuge against exterior enemies, the world and the devil. And at the hour of death, what a consolation to be able to flee to the Sacred Heart of our Ceaseless Friend for comfort and encouragement on the way!

I Will Bestow a Large Blessing upon All Their Undertakings  
(Fifth Promise)

God is vitally interested in what we do. His Providence regulates our every act. Our purpose in life is to work out our salvation. Temporal good fortune and worldly successes are but natural means to a supernatural end. In so far as the activities of our daily life are means to that end, the Sacred Heart wishes to bless them with special graces. At times God may allow our undertakings to fail. Even in that case He has blessed them. It may be that God foresees that success, material prosperity, release from sorrow, suffering, or ill health would bring about our spiritual ruin. Riches, honors, pleasure, immunity from suffering are not always blessings. If what we ask for is not for the glory of God or the greater good of our souls, "May Thy will be done, O Sacred Heart of Jesus." "To them that love God all things work together unto good" (Romans 8:28).

Sinners Shall Find in My Heart the Source and Infinite Ocean of Mercy  
(Sixth Promise)

Heaven is peopled with souls who have felt the pull of this promise. "Mercy," says St. Thomas, "is an interior compassion which one has for the miseries of others and which urges one to do something to relieve those miseries." The Scriptures give us many examples of Christ's mercy. Our Lord is forever interested in sinners. He seeks their conversion, their renewal in spirit, their eternal salvation. He searches for the lost sheep; the bent reed He will not break; the prodigal son He lovingly embraces. Since Our Lord did so much for sinners, boldness prompts one to say

that the sinner is His best friend. "Greater love than this no one hath, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

**Tepid Souls Shall Grow Fervent  
(Seventh Promise)**

In this promise the affectionate Heart of Christ offers comfort and encouragement to His weary "laggards in love." The tepid soul is spiritually sick. It has lost its taste for spiritual things. Prayer has become mere routine; spiritual exercises, a burden. Confession is made without an attempt at amendment, Communion received without fruit, dissipation indulged in, an inordinate interest taken in material affairs.

"I know thy works," says the Lord, "thou art neither cold nor hot. Would that thou hadst been cold or hot. As it is, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot. I am about to vomit thee out of my mouth. Thou sayest, 'I am rich and have grown wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and knowest not that thou art the wretched and pitiable and poor and blind and naked one" (Apocalypse 3:15-17).

What a graphic picture of the tepid soul! Only by following the lead of the Carpenter's Son can the tepid soul hope to exterminate these pests that are bringing to naught the structure of his spiritual life.

**Fervent Souls Shall Quickly Mount to High Perfection  
(Eighth Promise)**

The sinner, we have seen, shall be converted and live; the tepid, by having his jaded and weakening zeal sparked into renewed activity, shall strengthen anew the foundations of his spiritual life; the already fervent soul is here being invited to strive for still higher sanctity. The Heart of Jesus is a burning furnace of charity. Any soul drawing close to It cannot but be warmed, inflamed with that ardent

love of the God-man. The closer the fervent soul draws to the Heart of Christ, the more clearly shall it see and understand the great undying love of Our Lord for men. Warmed interiorly at the burning furnace of divine love, refreshed from the fountain of life and holiness, enriched with graces from the infinite treasures of the Sacred Heart, the fervent soul shall make rapid strides along the road to perfection.

I Will Bless Every Place Where a Picture of My Heart Shall Be Set up and Honored  
(Ninth Promise)

"One day," writes St. Margaret Mary, "this Divine Heart was shown to me as on a throne of fire and flames, emitting brilliant rays on all sides, more dazzling than the sun, and transparent as crystal. The Wound that He received on the Cross appeared quite clearly. There was a crown of thorns round this Sacred Heart and a cross above it . . . And the Saviour assured me that He took a singular delight in being honoured under the figure of this Heart of flesh, the representation of which He desired to be exposed in public, in order, He added, by its means to touch the insensible hearts of men. He promised me that He would pour down in abundance into the hearts of all those who honour It all the gifts of which It is so full; and that wherever this image was exposed, with a view to receiving special honour, it would draw down on the place every sort of blessing." What more need we say of so popular and fruitful a practice!

I Will Give to Priests the Gift of Touching the Most Hardened Hearts  
(Tenth Promise)

This promise is addressed primarily to priests, but it does not exclude the other laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. Priests have been anointed and consecrated for the things of God, to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to save souls by administering to them the sacraments. The priest deals directly with souls; others, for the most part,

only indirectly. Brothers, Sisters, and seminarians ultimately depend upon the priest to absolve the sinners and to administer the sacraments to the souls their prayers and labors have saved. This promise conveys a message of help and encouragement to all who promote and advance by all means in their power the interests of the Sacred Heart. To profit by this promise one must, naturally, have a tender devotion to the Sacred Heart and labor assiduously to spread this devotion and establish it in the hearts of all men.

Those Who Shall Promote This Devotion Shall Have Their Names Written in My Heart  
Never to Be Blotted Out (Eleventh Promise)

In season and out the promoter of this devotion is habitually occupied in working for the Heart of Christ, in striving to make It better known, better loved, more faithfully served. The promoter begins, of course, at home. His primary task is to establish this devotion firmly in his own heart. Only when the flames of love burn ardently within his own heart can he inflame other hearts. The ejaculation, "All for Thee, O Sacred Heart of Jesus," is ever on his lips. The greater glory of the Sacred Heart determines everything he does. Introducing others to the merciful Heart of Christ insures for him that his name will be placed in the Heart of Christ, but only by a faithful perseverance in this good work to the very end can he be sure that it is "never to be blotted out."

I Promise Thee in the Excessive Mercy of My Heart That My All-Powerful Love Will Grant to All Those Who Communicate on the First Friday in Nine Consecutive Months the Grace of Final Penitence; They Shall Not Die in My Disgrace Nor Without Receiving Their Sacraments; My Divine Heart Shall Be Their Safe Refuge in This Last Moment  
(Twelfth Promise)

This is the so-called "Great Promise." Those who make the nine First Fridays do something which is evidently very pleasing to the Sacred Heart, and in return they are given the well-founded hope of a happy death. This does not, of course, mean that they can cease cooperating

with the grace of God after they have made the nine First Fridays. Perseverance to the end is a requisite for salvation; and perseverance is not had save through prayer and cooperation with grace. The promise does not guarantee the opportunity of receiving the last sacraments, in the ordinary sense of the expression. Our Lord said they would receive "their sacraments." If God sees fit to call a soul that has faithfully made the nine First Fridays and continued to cooperate with grace, He might call that soul suddenly; and the sacraments for such a person would be the last confession he had made and the last Communion he had received. His death, though sudden, would not be unprovided. And the fact that he had been in the state of grace might well be the result of *special* graces provided by the Sacred Heart in fulfilling this "Great Promise."

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Our hurried comment on each of the promises has given us but a hasty glance at the unimaginable, the unsearchable riches this devotion possesses. Whatever we are, whatever we can do, that we are and can do only through Christ. His Heart is the source of the whole supernatural life; from It comes all light, all strength, all love, all true sentiments, all noble endeavors, all holy works.

Many of us have, at some time or other, longed eagerly to run to the end of the rainbow and make our own the pot of gold legend has placed there. That pot of gold, we imagined, would make us fabulously rich and forever happy. We are still somewhat interested, are we not, in that pot of gold and the happiness it offers? We should seek it, therefore in the devotion to the Sacred Heart. That is where we shall most easily find it.

# Communications

Reverend Fathers:

The topic of self-deceit, suggested by a Sister superior, interests me very much because I myself have been a superior for the greater part of thirty years.

I think that superiors themselves are sometimes the cause of self-deceit among religious. If the superior gives the example of virtue to her subjects, there will be no reason for self-deceit. The superior is like a torch which God has made more brilliant that all may see by her light what they must practise. If subjects are blind to their faults, it may be because they are not getting good example from authority. Authority without the support of good example produces either hypocrites or rebels. On the other hand, a superior will not be faithful, silent, and punctual, without the subjects' unconsciously following her example. "Like superior, like community!" According to St. Vincent de Paul, the virtues and faults of a community usually come from the superior.

Moreover, if souls mean well, the superior has the advantage of a good will to work with. By the precept of love, she should have no difficulty in making erring religious sensible to their faults. Charity overcomes everything when it perseveres unrepelled by coldness, unwearied by resistance.

A superior should remember that her zeal for the perfection of her subjects should always be accompanied by prudence. St. Jane de Chantal said: "You must know, my very dear daughter, that all your sisters will not take the same flight toward perfection; some will fly high, others low, others will take a middle course; treat each one according to her capacity." By being overzealous, the superior loses the affection of her subjects, and once that is lost she can do but little for them; but if she wins their confidence by love, they will follow her closely on the mount of perfection. It is up to the superior to lead the way. St. Francis of Assisi tells us that the perfection of government consists in five words: to love, to watch, to bear, to pardon, and to nourish. The one word, love, really sums it all up. Love will always find a way to reach a soul.

I feel that superiors can be assured that they do not belong to the class of religious that are blinded by self-deceit if they are mortified,



detached religious, grounded and rooted in humility. They, more than any subject, are exposed to this fault because of their very office, which risks the loss of humility, obedience, peace of soul, solitude, and silence. Thus it is especially necessary for them to be united with God and above all things to become souls of prayer. "The government of oneself is necessary for the government of others."

It is our duty to keep Jesus Christ before us, the great model of all superiors. How patiently He bore with the rudeness, jealousy, and other faults of His disciples!

#### A Mother Superior

Reverend Fathers:

May I add my suggestion to the interesting ones already printed in the March number of the REVIEW?

Lay people are often critical of religious (men and women) who pay the lowest possible salary to their employees and who exact from them more work and more time than the original contract called for. Can it be that religious, who are supposed to strive for perfection, neglect the very important virtue of justice in their dealing with others? Would a translation of the letter of Cardinal Villeneuve of Quebec on social justice be a sharp reminder of the obligations of elementary justice? (The text of the letter appeared in *La Vie des Communautés Religieuses*, Sept., 1944.)

#### A Priest Religious

Reverend Fathers:

In your last issue a Sister brought up the question, "Is there not too much formalism in our life?"—and she cited the example of a boy who had committed suicide because someone who could have helped him was at prayer when he called.

Examples like this suicide case prove nothing. The point that many religious forget is that they are professional people, and no reasonable person can expect them to be on call twenty-four hours a day. Religious orders would be wrecked overnight if their members were at the mercy of every whim and caprice of undisciplined souls that want us to be their servants whenever their impulse suggests. Such people often have much less respect for us than they do for doctors, who require them to observe appointments and office hours. Any priest or religious who is at the continual call of unreasonable people not only endangers his health, but his misguided sympathy is

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likely to do more harm than good to his client, and he has little or no time left for people who really need his help and can profit by it.

One means of taking care of this situation is to have an intelligent doorkeeper or switchboard operator who can judge when there is a real need. If some such means as this is impossible, the religious themselves must learn to judge when their help is really needed or useful. If they allow themselves to be victimized by every Tom, Dick, and Harry that applies for help they will soon have no time left for their regular duties. Sympathy-seekers mark an over-indulgent priest or religious as tramps mark the gateposts of an easy meal; and soon you are swamped by sympathy-seekers from all over town who want more to be told that they are doing the right thing than to be told the right thing to do.

### A Priest Religious

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Concerning Communications

We have received a few communications suggesting the discussion of the canon law for religious. It seems to us that this matter is already provided for in the articles and in the *Questions and Answers*. However, if any readers have specific suggestions for such a discussion in the *Communications*, the suggestions will be welcome.

### Concerning Questions

It seems inadvisable to answer all types of questions in the REVIEW. We try to limit the *Questions and Answers* to points that are of interest or utility to all our readers, or at least to a definite group of readers. If we judge that a question should not be answered in the REVIEW, we answer it privately—if the questioner sends his name and address.

The foregoing explains why some questions sent to us have not been answered, either publicly or privately. Of course, there are other possible explanations. We purposely save some questions until an appropriate time: for example, questions about Lenten observances are usually printed in the number immediately preceding Lent. Finally, our space is limited, and our time is equally limited; and the result is that we sometimes get behind in answering questions—as we are now.

### Concerning Pamphlets

Publishers sometimes send us pamphlets "for review." We cannot guarantee a review of pamphlets; in fact, we cannot even guarantee to list all pamphlets received. We try, however, to list at least those pamphlets that seem to have a special value for our readers.

## Questions and Answers

—22—

For reasons of health, a religious, with permission, rises late and hears Mass at an hour later than do the rest of her Sisters. Fearing the possible disedification of externs who attend this later Mass, the superioress forbids the religious in question to receive Holy Communion at this Mass. Can such a prohibition be justified?

According to Canon 863, even the laity are to be encouraged to receive Holy Communion daily. For religious we have the following prescription of Canon 595, 2, 3:

"Superiors should promote among their subjects the frequent, even daily, reception of Holy Communion; and liberty must be given to every properly disposed religious to approach frequently, even daily, the Most Holy Eucharist." In *Religious Men and Women in the Code*, we read the following on p. 97: "The obligation placed upon superiors regards religious who are sick at least as much as those who are in good health, since the sick have greater need of being strengthened by the Holy Eucharist. Superiors, then, will do all in their power to assist the sick in receiving Holy Communion daily, if such be their desire."

Unless this alleged fear of disedification of the laity is founded on fact and not upon empty suspicions, the superior should allow the religious subject to receive Holy Communion at this later Mass. Even if the fear is well-founded, the superior will do all in her power to make it possible for such a Sister to receive daily, something to which she has a strict right.

—23—

If a religious has *unjustly* disposed of money belonging to his institute, is he obliged to make restitution?

If he has property of his own, he is certainly obliged to recompense the institute from his own funds. For determining the method of making such restitution, he should consult a confessor. If he has no property, he may generally consider himself as excused from the obligation of making restitution until such time as he would become the possessor of property. This would very likely mean that in many

cases the religious would be perpetually excused from making restitution to the institute; but it seems to be the most practicable solution to the case. It is sometimes suggested that the religious should get a condonation from a superior (provided the superior has the power to give a condonation), but this solution is open to the danger of self-revelation, and we see no solid reason for calling it obligatory. It is also suggested that the religious can make restitution by economizing; but this suggestion seems to overlook the fact that a religious is not entitled to superfluities. He is supposed to lead a frugal life, and he could hardly be obliged to deprive himself in any notable way of the things that pertain to such a life.

—24—

Girls who are illegitimate are banned from entering our congregation unless they have been duly legitimated. What is meant by "duly legitimated"? In case of adopted children, would adoption make them legitimate?

According to the Code of Canon Law there are three ways of legitimating children. The first is by the subsequent true or putative marriage of their parents . . . provided the parents were *free to marry* either at the time of conception, or during pregnancy, or at the birth of the child: that is to say, provided that at any one of these times the parents were not subject to any impediment to marriage (c. 1116). The second provides for cases in which the parents are impeded from marrying by reason of a diriment impediment. When a dispensation is granted from the impediment in question by one having ordinary power, or generally delegated power, that dispensation carries with it the legitimation of all children already born or conceived, except however adulterine or sacrilegious offspring (c. 1051). The third method, which must be used in all other cases, is to obtain an indult of legitimation from the Holy See. The mere fact of civil adoption does not legitimate an illegitimate child in canon law.

—25—

Just to keep the record straight—was the indult of Pope Benedict XV granting a plenary indulgence for every Holy Communion of Reparation in honor of the Sacred Heart (see question 14 in March, 1945, number of this Review) given to all the faithful in general, or only to the Associates of the Apostleship of Prayer?

The privilege granted by Pope Benedict XV was given to the

Associates of the Apostleship of Prayer, not to the faithful in general. That is the reason why Father O'Connor did not mention it in his article referred to in question 14.

—26—

While the Sister sacristan may not do the first washing of purificators and other linens used in the Mass, is it permissible according to canon 1306 for her to touch and handle them while preparing them for the washing?

Yes, canon 1306 gives all clerics as well as other persons duly appointed to care for the sacred vessels and altar linens the permission to touch them, and explicitly mentions purificators, palls, and corporals which have been used for the Holy Sacrifice. All sacristans, therefore, may touch these linens while preparing them for the washing.

—27—

Must a religious congregation hold title to the property in which six professed members reside in order that the religious community be canonically established as a *domus formata* or formal house?

The term "formal house" or "religious house" in general in canon law refers not to the material dwelling in which the religious live, but to the moral person who constitutes the community, that is, to the religious family. Hence it is not necessary that the religious community or the congregation own the material edifice in which they live. The members constitute a formal house provided the community has been canonically established and numbers six professed members (four of whom must be priests if it is a clerical institute).

—28—

Has the principal or the pastor the right to tell a teacher what marks are to be given to the class or to certain members of the class?

Under ordinary circumstances, the teacher is the one to do the marking; and others have no right to interfere. We say, "under ordinary circumstances"; because certain extraordinary cases might warrant the intervention of a superior: for example, if a teacher has, either consciously or unconsciously, been unjust. In order to assign definite marks, however, the intervening superiors would have to hear recitations, or give examinations, or find some equivalent way of forming a judgment.

—29—

Is a mother general or mother provincial obliged to study the canon law concerning the government of religious houses?

Superiors are obliged to learn what is necessary for carrying out their office according to the law of the Church and according to the prescriptions of their own constitutions. This does not mean that all superiors must take a formal course in the canon law for religious, though that would be quite desirable.

—30—

Does a religious superior neglect her duty if she fails to avail herself of the opportunity to learn the correct interpretation of canon law because she fears that the knowledge thus obtained might force her to change certain customs existing in her community?

This appears to be a case of "affected ignorance": namely, ignorance that is purposely fostered lest one be forced to carry out some unpleasant duty. In itself, it is certainly neglect of duty; but it is possible that in many cases such as that outlined in the question the subjective attitude of the superior is an instance of hopeless perplexity rather than of genuine guilt. It is no simple task to separate communities from their cherished customs. Nevertheless, if the customs are contrary to the law of the Church, the superior should know this and should either abolish the customs or get the permission of the Holy See to retain them.

—31—

When temporary vows are taken for a period of three years and according to the constitutions are renewed for a second triennium, should the professed Sisters wait until the second triennium has expired before taking their perpetual vows, or have superiors the authority to admit the professed Sisters to perpetual vows any time after the first two years of the second triennium of temporary vows have expired?

If the constitutions prescribe two periods of three years of temporary vows for *all the members* of the institute, then the superiors may not allow any of the Sisters to take perpetual vows before the six years of temporary vows have been completed, unless the constitutions give them explicit power to do so. However, unless the constitutions state that the perpetual vows cannot be taken *validly* before the six years of temporary vows have expired, perpetual vows taken

after five years of temporary vows would be valid, but gravely illicit.

It is possible that our inquirer is referring to the provisions of canon 574, § 2, which are usually included in the constitutions also, and which allow the superior for grave reasons to extend the period of temporary vows required by the Code and by the constitutions, but not beyond another three years. In such cases the Sister must, at the expiration of the first triennium, renew her temporary vows for whatever period the superior prescribes up to three years. In this latter case if the Sister shows such marked improvement that the superior considers her worthy of perpetual vows, it would not be necessary to wait for the expiration of the second triennium of temporary vows, but the Sister could be allowed to take her perpetual vows at any time.

—32—

Our constitutions state that "all the Sisters shall observe the fasts and abstinences prescribed by the law of the Church according to the custom of the diocese and place in which they reside." Does this article impose a second obligation over and above that arising from the general law of the Church? If so, could the superior dispense from it when the local Ordinary has dispensed the faithful of the diocese from the general law regarding fast and abstinence?

No, the constitutions do not impose a new or second obligation by stating that the Sisters shall observe the general laws of the Church regarding fast and abstinence; they merely recall these laws to the minds of the Sisters. Hence there will be no need for special dispensation on the part of the superior for the religious to use dispensations granted by the local Ordinary. Canon 620 states explicitly that when the local Ordinary grants a dispensation, the obligation of the common law of the Church ceases also for all religious living in the diocese. However, according to the same canon, vows and constitutions proper to each individual religious institute are not affected by such a dispensation. This last clause refers to obligations over and above those imposed by the common law of the Church by reason of a special vow taken by the religious or by special obligations imposed by the constitutions. Thus in some religious communities, abstinence is prescribed by the constitutions on all Wednesdays throughout the year. If Memorial Day (May 30) happens to fall on the Wednesday of Ember Week, and the bishop gives a dispensation from the Church's law of fast and abstinence, the religious in ques-

tion would not have to fast; but they would still be bound to abstain by reason of the particular prescription of their constitutions obliging them to abstain on all Wednesdays of the year.

## —33—

A religious nurse is on duty on a floor which leads to the choir loft of the hospital chapel. Occasionally she has time to enter the choir loft for a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. On such an occasion could she make the way of the cross by genuflecting to each station and meditating briefly on the sacred passion of our Lord?

One of the requirements for gaining the indulgences of the way of the cross is that the person move from station to station while meditating upon the sacred passion of our Lord. This obviously cannot be done in the choir loft if the stations are located in the body of the church or chapel. The Sister, however, could use a crucifix blessed with the indulgences of the way of the cross for those who are "legitimately impeded." See question 7 in *REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS*, January, 1944, p. 70.

## —34—

In most religious congregations the constitutions provide that the superior general and his councillors be elected by the general chapter, which is made up of the superior general, his councillors, local superiors, and a delegate from each house. Would it be possible to obtain permission to have such an election by general ballot, that is, all the religious of the congregation voting directly for the superior general and the councillors?

Originally, all religious monasteries were independent, and the community was housed under one roof. It was natural for such communities to give all the professed members the right to vote in elections of superiors. The establishment of the mendicant orders in the twelfth century introduced central government for all houses by uniting them under a common superior general. This superior general and his assistants, usually termed councillors, were elected in a general chapter composed of the local superiors and delegates from the individual houses. If the Order was divided into provinces, the chapter was usually made up of the provincial superiors and two or more delegates from each province elected in the provincial chapter. Thus a general chapter composed of superiors and delegates representing the various houses or provinces became a characteristic feature



of such central government and has been retained by the Church in our own times.

According to the present practice of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, the method of election by a general chapter composed of superiors and delegates is insisted upon; and there would be little or no hope for a religious congregation approved by the Holy See to obtain a change in the constitutions which would allow all the members to vote for the superior general and his councillors. In the case of diocesan congregations whose constitutions allow this the local Ordinary may still tolerate it; but many such constitutions are being changed by the local Ordinaries to conform with the general practice of the Church.

### PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

AUGUSTINIAN PRESS, 3900 Harewood Road, N. E., Washington 17, D.C.

*Take My Advice*, by Rev. Thomas F. Gilligan, O.S.A. (An explanation of the devotion to Our Mother of Good Counsel). 4 cents a copy.

THE PAULIST PRESS, 401 West 59th Street, New York 19, N.Y.

*Obedience*, by Rev. George J. Haye. No price given.

THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS, 3200 Meramec Street, St. Louis 18, Mo.

*The Third Order Director*, 15 cents; *A Rule of Life*, by Fr. Thomas Grassmann, O.M.C., 10 cents; *The Ceremonial of Reception and Profession*, 10 cents; *The Original Rule of the Tertiaries*, edited by Fr. Maximus Poppy, O.F.M., 10 cents.

CATECHETICAL GUILD, 128 East 10th Street, St. Paul 1, Minnesota.

*The Case against the Comics*, by Gabriel Lynn, 5 cents; *The Teacher and the Comics*, by Gabriel Lynn, 5 cents; *Bring Your Rosary to Life*, by Rev. Paul R. Milde, O.S.B., 15 cents; *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, by Rev. T. J. O'Kane, 15 cents; *A Little Life of Our Lady*, by Sister Mary Aurea, B.V.M., 15 cents.

RADIO REPLIES PRESS, 500 Robert Street, St. Paul 1, Minnesota.

*Seventh Day Adventists*, by Fathers Rumble and Carty, 10 cents; *Jewish Problems*, by David Goldstein, LL.D., 15 cents; *Anti-Semitism*, by Rev. Arthur J. Riley, Ph.D., 15 cents; *Six Pre-Marriage Instructions for Catholics and Non-Catholics*, by Fathers Rumble and Carty, 10 cents; *American Girl! Halt! Harken to the Cry of the Children*, by Fathers Rumble and Carty, a pamphlet on vocations to the teaching sisterhoods, 10 cents; *To be a Priest*, by Fathers Rumble and Carty, 10 cents.

THE MONTFORT FATHERS, Bay Shore, New York.

*The Secret of Mary*, by Blessed Louis Grignon De Montfort, 15 cents; *Il Segreto Di Maria o La Schiavitù D'Amore Della SS. Vergine*, traduzione del P. Callisto Bonicelli, S.M.M., 10 cents.

THE GRAIL, St. Meinrad, Indiana.

*The Seminarian's Way of the Cross*, by Jerome Palmer, O.S.B., 10 cents; *Way of the Cross for Service Men*, by Dom Gregory de Wit, O.S.B., 10 cents, 15 for \$1.00; *Way of the Cross for Religious*, translated and adapted by a Monk of St. Meinrad's Abbey, 10 cents.

## Book Reviews

**THE QUALITY OF MERCY.** By the Right Reverend Hugh Francis Blunt, LL.D. Pp. xiii + 183. The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1945. \$1.75.

Stressing history rather than analysis Monsignor Blunt has presented us with a fine and interesting treatment of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. This little book should have universal appeal. Religious will find in its chapters excellent material for meditation as well as spiritual reading, though the rapid change of scene may perhaps make it less fit for refectory reading. Clear exposition joined with copious, well-chosen texts from the Old and New Testaments and the writings of the great saints of the Church will provide priests with suitable matter for sermons and conferences. Catholics of all ages and degrees will derive from this book a clear understanding and practical love of the second of the two great commandments, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

In the first four chapters the groundwork of the discussion is laid. After clarifying the idea and practice of mercy as the pagans and Jews conceived it, the author unveils to our eyes the sublimity and matchless beauty of the Christian concept. Whatever kindness a Christian shows his neighbor is shown to Christ. One's fellow-man is not to be loved for the civic improvement of the state, as the pagans thought; nor is mercy to be limited to those of one nation, as the Jews conceived; but all men as children of God, redeemed by Christ, are to be treated as the divine Master. So important is the practice of supernatural mercy that Christ singles it out as the principal cause of salvation or condemnation.

The individual chapters on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy are well handled. At first sight there appears to be danger of repetition and lack of material in such particular discussion, but the author has succeeded in adhering to each point very closely and yet providing apt and varied reflections for the different works. His intimate knowledge of the Old and New Testaments and the easy manner in which he quotes the Fathers and the saints, Church history, and the great litterateurs explain the smooth, untiring flow of his ideas. A bibliography of the authors and works quoted would perhaps prove useful to those who wish to investigate the subject further.—R. D. HUBER, S.J.

**AN ESSAY ON THE ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE REFORMATION.**

By George O'Brien. Pp. x + 194. The Newman Bookshop, Westminster, Md., 1944. \$2.50.

Through this work and its companion piece, *An Essay on Medieval Economic Teaching*, Doctor O'Brien has helped pioneer in English-speaking lands a better understanding of what the Protestant disaster has meant to European civilization. Protestantism, he contends, has contributed to the rise of the worst features of capitalism, the ascendancy of rationalistic unbelief, and even to present-day socialism. Because of its emphasis on the individual, Protestant Christianity found itself incapable of exerting restraint over man's economic greed which the medieval Church had exercised. Calvinistic Protestantism emphasized the frugal amassing of great wealth as a sign of divine election and "vocation," thus sanctifying great fortunes and stigmatizing poverty as a sign of moral degeneration and inevitable damnation. Also by destroying the true concept of social solidarity, these new sects gave rise first to a false laissez-faire liberalism and then to its inevitable reaction in a totalitarian socialism.

This Newman edition is apparently the same as the 1923 English edition. The publisher unfortunately does not let us know whether or not any changes have been made.

Since 1923 many more recent studies have covered the same ground in a better way. However, scholarship has not invalidated any of Doctor O'Brien's major conclusions.—R. L. PORTER, S.J.

**PRIESTHOOD: CONFERENCES ON THE RITE OF ORDINATION. By the**

Reverend Aloysius Biskupek, S.V.D. Pp. vi + 398. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1945. \$3.50.

Priests and priests-to-be will find this a very readable, thoughtful, and spiritual book. Practically the entire ordination ceremony is given in translation in the course of the book. Each part is carefully commented upon to bring out the significance of the words and actions of the rite of ordination. Father Biskupek puts particular stress on the relationship between the ordination ceremonies and the personal sanctification of the priest. This might be called the theme of the book. Priests will find this book a good spiritual check-up during their annual retreat and an inspiration in their apostolate.

—A. LEVET, S.J.

**POPE PIUS XII: PRIEST AND STATESMAN.** By Kees van Hoek. Pp. 106. Philosophical Library, New York, 1944. \$2.00.

This little book, published first in London, by Burns, Oates, Washbourne in 1940, is the work of a prominent Catholic journalist, Kees van Hoek. A biography of the present Pontiff, it is not, as the Bishop of Galway says in the Foreword, one "of the superficial flippant write-ups of the sensation-loving Press, but a carefully drawn, sincere portrait by one who has the power to recognize and depict greatness—greatness of character and of ideal." It recounts the life of Eugenio Pacelli from the time he was a delicate boy in Rome until he became the supreme ruler of the Catholic Church.

An accurate and vivid picture is drawn of a great statesman who has traveled all over the world and learned through experience the difficult art of diplomacy—a man well-fitted to handle the intricate problems of world peace. In the words of Kaiser Wilhelm II, the Pope "has a distinguished sympathetic appearance; he is of a high intelligence and has impeccable manners; in short, the prototype of a Prince of the Church."

Nevertheless, by a series of intimate and personal details, the author shows Pius XII to be a man of human kindness and deep spirituality, whose daily routine is rigorous to the point of asceticism. Every religious will be inspired by this brief study of the Vicar of Christ.—J. W. NAUGHTON, S.J.

**THE BOND OF PEACE.** By Michael Kent. Pp. vi + 186. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1945. \$2.00.

The "bond" is love, and the essential way to it is sacrifice, especially in its highest expression—the Mass. But sceptics must be convinced that such a thing is possible and that it has once been achieved, at least to a great extent. How this was done and why it was lost form the theme of the first and second of the four parts which make up the book. The two first are entitled respectively "Emancipation" and "Reformation." The eight chapters of these parts develop into an apologetic for the Catholic Church and a characterization of the Protestant Reformation as well as of its consequences which endure down to our own day. Here we arrive at present-day liberalism whose anti-rational character and superficiality are depicted in the first chapters of the book. The widespread disappointment of our days and the folly of demanding complete emancipation are shown to stem from the leading principles of the Reform-

ers: private judgment, change of doctrine instead of correction of abuses, divorce of faith from conduct, and disturbance of the balance of the social classes which opened the way for absolute kings and disenfranchisement of the proletariat.

The proofs for the single statements are gathered in Appendix I. In the main these are taken from three textbooks in history which have no leaning towards Catholicism. Some readers may find it more profitable to read these citations first and then to follow the author's analysis in the single chapters. From this groundwork flows as a conclusion the necessity of individual and personal action in the face of the world crisis through which we are passing. The last two parts detail this process.—A. C. WAND, S.J.

**SISTER HELEN: THE LITHUANIAN FLOWER.** By the Reverend Joseph R. Maciulionis, M.I.C. Pp. xiv + 210. Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., New York, 1944. No price given.

The title of this book is misleading. There is relatively little about Sister Helen, much about the author. It is really an autobiography of Father Maciulionis, with the thread of Sister Helen's influence on his priestly vocation interwoven. The autobiography is interesting in spite of a lack of unity and coherence in the narrative; but the reader closes the book regretting that the author did not tell him more about the work of The Sisters of St. Casimir and something at least about his own Marian Fathers' Congregation.

**EMERGENCY BAPTISM.** By the Reverend Joseph B. McAllister, S.S. Pp. 48. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1945. \$40 (paper).

This booklet consists of a carefully arranged set of notes concerning baptism, especially in the case of emergency. In schematic form it presents the canon law on the subject, together with safe and very sane interpretations of the canons. A very handy book to use in teaching this matter to a class of nurses, and a serviceable ready-reference manual for the use of those who have already studied the subject. Possibly the text is somewhat jejune for those who wish to learn privately; but even these could glean valuable and essential information from the booklet. A complete index and marginal numbers in the text facilitate the use of the manual.

**THE CALLING OF A DIOCESAN PRIEST.** By the Reverend Joseph Clifford Fenton, S.T.D. Pp. 68. The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Maryland, 1944. \$.50 (paper).

This booklet seems to be intended principally for students of theology destined for the diocesan priesthood. The author begins by pointing out what he considers to be the precise distinction between the two forms of priestly vocation, religious and diocesan. Having made the distinction, in successive chapters, he discusses the purpose of and the preparation for the diocesan priesthood, the function of prayer in the life of a diocesan priest, and the spirit that should characterize such a priest. Father Fenton shows a keen appreciation of the religious life and of the diocesan priesthood. Yet his precise distinction between the religious and diocesan priesthood is debatable. He seems to have overlooked the possibility that the vocation of the religious priest is really a two-fold vocation, or, perhaps better, a single vocation with a two-fold *primary* end: personal perfection and the priestly work of Jesus Christ. Is it really stating the whole case to say that the primary and

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immediate goal of the diocesan ministry is the priestly work of Jesus Christ, whereas the religious priest is meant primarily to seek the sacerdotal office in order to make his own life more pleasing to God? The question calls for further elucidation.

**THE REIGN OF JESUS THROUGH MARY.** By the Reverend Gabriel Denis, S.M.M. Pp. xiv + 297. The Montfort Fathers, Bay Shore, New York, 1944. \$1.00.

The purpose of this book is to help people apply to their everyday life the doctrine of the "holy slavery of Jesus in Mary," as expounded by Blessed Grignon de Montfort. *The Reign of Jesus Through Mary* first explains the doctrine, then gives a number of methods of applying it to the various spiritual exercises and ordinary external occupations of the day, and concludes with some special spiritual exercises and prayers. This is the first American edition of the book, thoroughly revised and somewhat enlarged.

**TREATISE ON THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.** By St. Vincent Ferrer. Translated from the French by the Reverend T. A. Dixon, O.P. Pp. vii + 58. The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Maryland, 1944. \$.50 (paper).

This is a manual of ascetical directions written by St. Vincent Ferrer for the benefit of Dominicans placed under his direction. The nineteen brief chapters contain suggestions and rules concerning poverty, silence, obedience, temperance, sleep, study, recitation of the Office, preaching, remedies against temptations, motives for striving after perfection, and so forth. Great emphasis is put on self-abnegation and self-contempt.

**THE APPEAL TO THE EMOTIONS IN PREACHING.** By Edmond Darvil Benard, M.A., S.T.D. Pp. 46. The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Md., 1945. \$.50 (paper).

Priests and seminarians will find in this booklet a good discussion of the proper place of emotion in sermons. Beginning with the solid foundation of the Thomistic theory of emotion, the author discusses the leading principles of his subject in theory and in practice. The concluding chapter discusses some psychological aspects of sermon delivery and rightly insists on sincerity on the part of the speaker as an important factor in effective preaching. Examples from celebrated sermons are used to illustrate important points.

## Books Received

(From February 20 to April 20)

THE NEWMAN BOOK SHOP, Westminster, Maryland.

*The Appeal to the Emotions in Preaching.* By Edmond Darvil Benard, M.A., S.T.D. 50 cents. *The Calling of a Diocesan Priest.* By Joseph Clifford Fenton, S.T.D. 50 cents. *Treatise on the Spiritual Life.* By St. Vincent Ferrer. 50 cents.

THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY, Milwaukee.

*The Quality of Mercy.* By Rt. Rev. Hugh F. Blunt, LL.D. \$1.75. *Too Small a World: The Life of Francesca Cabrini.* By Theodore Maynard. \$2.50. *Emergency Baptism.* By Rev. Joseph B. McAllister, S.S. 40 cents.

B. HERDER BOOK COMPANY, St. Louis.

*Priesthood: Conferences on the Rite of Ordination.* By Rev. Aloysius Biskupek, S.V.D. \$3.50.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, Philadelphia.

*The Nurse: Handmaid of the Divine Physician.* By Sister Mary Berenice (Beck), R.N., Ph.D. Nursing Text Edition, \$2.00; Trade Edition, \$2.50.

## Grace and Beauty

G. Augustine Ellard, S.J.

**A**N EFFECT of sanctifying grace that does not seem to get as much mention and consideration as it deserves is the beauty that it possesses and adds to the soul. And yet beauty, with truth and goodness, is the object of the principal aspirations of every spirit. Moreover, beauty is an important element in the value of grace. A clearer knowledge of the beauty of grace should lead to a higher appreciation of it and a more eager desire for it.

I. One could hardly hope in the present stage of the evolution of esthetic philosophy to propose a formal definition of beauty that would be generally acceptable. Fortunately, it is one of those things of which nearly everybody feels that he has a fairly satisfactory empirical notion, even though he could not set it forth in words. Among the definitions of beauty current among those who have studied the matter in the light of Aristotelian or Thomistic philosophy we find : "the splendor of truth" (attributed to Plato); "the splendor of order" (St. Augustine); "the effulgence of form in material elements definitely limited and proportioned, or in different forces or actions" (St. Thomas); "the goodness of a thing inasmuch as when known by the mind it gives delight" (Kleutgen, Jungmann); and "the perfection of a thing that makes it pleasing to behold" (Gietmann). Some would place beauty in truth, others in the goodness of a thing, and still others in both truth and goodness together. Even when it is embodied in material objects, the perception of it is essentially spiritual; animals give no evidence of having a sense of the beautiful.



Beauty may be either physical or moral. Moral beauty is found only in the character or moral activity of persons; when one's character or action is such that the very sight or thought of it excites delight and admiration, then it is morally beautiful. Many instances of heroism are examples of it. All other beauty is physical. This may be material or spiritual. About the material there will be no difficulty, and about the spiritual there need be none. It is simply that beauty which belongs to spirits, as material beauty belongs to visible things. To see and appreciate it properly is possible, of course, only to spirits themselves; but we can have an analogous knowledge and enjoyment of it. It is very evident that angels must perceive one another and that that perception, of itself, must bring pleasure, in fact, great pleasure, because presumably the beauty of angels is proportionate to their general perfection. Therefore one (good) angel viewing another and finding him pleasant to behold would be experiencing what is meant by physical spiritual beauty. The angels now in heaven possess, as a matter of fact, over and above the beauty that follows their angelic nature, the supernatural beauty of grace. Being good, they exhibit also, of course, moral beauty. Similarly, human souls or spirits now in heaven and adorned with grace give pleasure to all who see them, both by reason of the natural perfection and beauty of the human spirit and because of the loveliness of their grace.

It is well to note that to please or delight, the beautiful need not actually be seen. It is sufficient that it can be seen, or has been seen, or can be represented in quasi-vision before the mind. A young man enjoys his beloved's beauty even when she is absent. A living human soul in grace is an object of actual and full complacency to whoever sees it; therefore certainly to God, most probably to one's guardian angel, and perhaps to all the blessed. In heaven its beauty



will add to the joys of all the angels and saints. Meanwhile there can be great satisfaction in really *being* beautiful, though that beauty be all hidden within, and in expecting the future manifestation of it.

II. Other works of God are beautiful; therefore, grace is beautiful. In view of the extension of beauty in God's works and the intensity of it in His greater creatures, this argument from induction or analogy seems to be legitimate. "The firmament on high is his beauty, the beauty of heaven with its glorious shew . . . . The glory of the stars is the beauty of heaven; the Lord enlighteneth the world on high . . . . Look upon the rainbow and bless him that made it: it is very beautiful in its brightness." (Ecclesiasticus 13: 1, 10, 12.) If the Supreme Artist has produced beauty so widely and so profusely throughout His creation—in natural scenery, in the forms of crytallization, in flowers, in birds, in the human form and face, and in the angelic nature—it is not likely that He has denied a high degree of it to what is in a very true sense one of the greatest of all His productions, namely, sanctifying grace.

III. A consideration of the nature of grace confirms the conclusion indicated by induction or analogy. Sanctifying grace is essentially a participation in the divine nature, that is, in what is in God the fundamental principle of the activity that is most characteristic of Him, namely, the direct intuition of infinite truth. Now God Himself must be supremely beautiful. He is the first author of all that is beautiful in His universe, in inanimate scenery, in the stars of the heavens, in the vegetative kingdom, in animals, in men and women, and in the angels. "Let them [men] observing the works of the Creator know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they: for the first author of beauty made all those things . . . . For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creatures, the Creator of

them may be seen, so as to be known thereby." (Wisdom 13: 3, 5.) Moreover all the beauties of human art are ultimately His creations. As a matter of fact God is not only the origin of all beauty; He is Beauty Itself, absolute, infinite, ineffable beauty, without the slightest admixture of anything that could detract from it. That beauty must be infinite, because the being, truth, and goodness upon which it is founded are immeasurable. Though all perfections are there, they are unified in the highest degree in absolute simplicity, and thus they exist in the most admirable harmony. God is His own unlimited light, brightness, and brilliance.

Long ago St. Augustine wrote of the beauty of God: "Consider the whole universe, the heavens, the earth, the sea, all that is in heaven or on earth or in the sea: how beautiful, how marvelous, how well and wisely arranged it all is! Do these things move you? Of course they move you. Why? Because they are beautiful. What then of Him who made them? You would be stunned, I think, if you saw the beauty of the angels. What therefore of the Creator of the Angels?" (*Serm.* 19, n. 5; *ML.* 38, 136.)

And St. Basil the Great: "Is there anything, I ask, more wonderful than the divine beauty? What thought is there more delightful and pleasant than the magnificence of God? . . . Altogether ineffable and indescribable is the brilliance of the divine beauty. Speech cannot make it known, nor ear receive it. Even though you should think of the splendors of the morning star, the brightness of the moon, or the light of the sun, everything beside the glory of that beauty is insignificant and dark, and compared with the true light is more distant from it than the depth of a gloomy and moonless night from the clearest noonday sun." (*Reg. Fus. Tract.; Interrog.* 2, n. 1; *MG.* 31, 910.)

Comprehensively to know the magnitude and fascina-

tion of Beauty Itself and the enrapturing effect of beholding it is possible only to one of the Blessed Trinity. To have some proper conception of it and how it feels subjectively to see it is possible only to those who have experienced the beatific vision, and even they could not express it in human language. Surely it is most significant that, given the present supernatural order of things, nothing on earth or in heaven except the sight of God can quite satisfy and quiet the aspirations of the human spirit. But the sight of infinite truth, goodness, and beauty is sufficient to beatify even the divine spirit. Even though the beauty of God must remain concealed from us while we are burdened with the veils of mortality, it is so great that for some contemplatives it can become a source of the most exquisite delight and ecstasy and a most potent stimulus to divine love.

Now sanctifying grace, being a participation of the divine nature, and hence of the divine beauty, must itself be correspondingly beautiful. Or, in other terms, grace is an assimilation to the divine nature and a resemblance to it, and must share in its beauty as a copy partakes of the excellence of a masterpiece. With the sonship to God which grace confers it must also bring something of the paternal lineaments and features.

St. Cyril of Alexandria, speaking of the effect of grace, wrote: "Is it not the Spirit that carves the divine image upon us and like a seal imprints upon us a beauty superior to any in the world?" (*Dial. 7 De Trin.*, p. 683.) Again: "All of us who have believed and become conformed to God have been made, through union with the Son and the Holy Spirit, participants of the divine nature, not only in name but in very reality in as much as we have been glorified with a beauty that is above all creation. For Christ is fashioned in us in a manner that is indescribable, not as one creature in another, but as God in created nature in that He

has transformed our created nature through the Holy Spirit into His likeness and raised us to a dignity surpassing that of all creatures." (*De Trin. L. 4.*) "The Spirit does not, like a painter, reproduce the divine substance in us as if He were extraneous to it, nor does He in this way bring us to the likeness of God; rather He Himself who is God and proceeds from God is invisibly impressed upon the hearts of those who receive Him like a seal upon wax, through communion and likeness to Himself, again painting our nature with the beauty of its original model and manifesting the divine image in man." (*Thesaur., MG. 75, 609.*)

St. Basil: "Man was made according to the image and likeness of God, but sin destroyed the beauty of that image . . . Let us return to the original grace from which we were alienated by sin. And let us beautify ourselves in the likeness of God." (*Sermo Ascet., MG., 31, 869.*)

Similarly St. Ambrose: "You have been painted therefore, O man, and painted by the Lord thy God. You have a good artist and painter; do not spoil the good painting, resplendent, not with color, but with the truth; expressed not with wax, but with grace." (*Hex. VI, 47.*) And St. Augustine: "Human nature, when it is justified by its Creator, is changed from ugliness and deformity into a lovely and beautiful form" (*De Trin. XV, c. 8, n. 14.*)

IV. Grace also gives one a share in the beauty of Christ. Among the three divine persons of the Blessed Trinity beauty is appropriated particularly to the Word, as "being the flashing-forth of" the Father's "glory, and the very expression of his being" (Hebrews 1:3), or, in Knox's version, "who is the radiance of his Father's splendour, and the full expression of his being." Even the created beauty of the humanity of Christ, natural and supernatural, physical and moral, material and spiritual, is very great indeed and an object of the keenest delight to all the angels

and saints who see it.

The Church in her liturgy often proclaims that beauty: "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men: grace is poured abroad in thy lips . . . . With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign." (Psalm 44:3-5.) Commenting on this passage St. Augustine wrote: "He is beautiful as God, the Word with the Father; He is beautiful in the womb of the Virgin, where He assumed humanity and did not lose His divinity; He is beautiful as a new-born babe and silent Word (*infans Verbum*) . . . . Beautiful therefore in heaven, beautiful on the earth; . . . beautiful in His miracles, beautiful in the scourging; beautiful while calling to life, and beautiful in not caring about death; beautiful as He lays down His life, and beautiful in taking it back; beautiful on the cross, beautiful in the sepulcher, beautiful in heaven . . . . Let not the imperfections of this body turn your eyes away from the splendor of His beauty. (*In Psalm. 44, 3.*) Clement of Alexandria thus extolls the attractiveness of Christ: "Our Savior surpasses all human nature. Indeed He is so beautiful that He alone deserves to be loved by us, if we desire true beauty; for He was the true light." (*Strom. L. 2, c. 5.*)

All who receive sanctifying grace are adorned after the model of Christ: "For all of you who were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27);<sup>1</sup> "My children with whom I am again in travail, until Christ be formed in you" (*Ibid.* 4:19); "Those whom he hath fore-known, them he hath predestined to bear a nature in the image of his Son's, that he should be first-born among many brethren" (Romans 8:29).

The Fathers of the Church like to emphasize the

<sup>1</sup>New Testament texts quoted in this article are from the Westminster Edition.

resemblance even in appearance between Christ and Christians. Thus St. Cyril of Alexandria writes: "Nor should we be sons by adoption and in likeness if there were no real and true son; to His form we are fashioned; to be like Him we are transformed with a certain art and grace" (*Thesaur. MG.*, 75, 526). "One is molded to become a son of God according to an excellent model . . . . This beauty is spiritual. By participation in the Holy Spirit they are fashioned in Christ as it were, according to Him as a model . . . . Christ is indeed formed in us, the Holy Spirit impressing upon us a certain figure, through holiness and justice." (*In Isaiam*, IV, II; *MG.*, 70, 936.) Similarly St. Gregory Nazianzene writes: "Since the day when you were changed by baptism, all your old features have disappeared, and one form has been impressed upon you all, namely, that of Christ" (*Or. 40 In Sancta Lum.*, n. 27).

V. According to the analysis of the beautiful made by St. Thomas and followed by many Catholic savants, there are three chief elements that concur to make a thing beautiful: integrity, harmony, and brightness.

Evidently integrity or completeness in all parts is necessary. A person who has lost, say, an arm or a leg would hardly be a candidate for a beauty prize, nor could a building of which some integral part has been destroyed exemplify architectural beauty. It is clear too that harmony, taken in a broad sense so as to include symmetry, proportion, order, and in general proper agreement, is required. All the different components that enter into the constitution of a thing that has beauty—for instance, a cathedral—must have appropriate size, mutually suit one another, be suitably arranged, and all in all so fit together into one coherent whole as really to make a unit and convey a unified impression. Order in some sense is so essential

to beauty that disorder and ugliness are almost synonymous. It may be noticed in passing that the name "cosmos" for the universe as an ordered system of things and the term "cosmetics," the art of improving feminine beauty, both come from the same old Greek word for "order."

There is an order that we may call static; it is illustrated, for example, in the disposition of an artistically planned painting or building. Dynamic order is found wherever different movements or actions are subordinated to one purpose: for instance, in the mechanism of an automobile or in the multitudinous movements of an orchestra. Order is in a peculiar sense the offspring of intelligence; and wherever it is found and in whatever degree, it gives satisfaction to the mind that perceives it. Though variety is said to please, no great degree of it is necessary if there be sufficient richness of content, as, for example, in the finest silks or velvets. Similarly certain single colors and tones, if they be sufficiently pure, rich, and clear, seem to be beautiful. "The eye admireth at the beauty of the whiteness thereof [snow]" (Ecclesiasticus 43:20).

The third element required for the beautiful is brightness. Perfection of being, which is otherwise able to delight one who simply considers it, can hardly make much of an impression on one who does not see it clearly. Relatively to us, therefore, at least, a certain clarity of presentation is necessary.

Judged by these three criteria, namely, integrity, harmony, and brightness, grace has a right to be called beautiful. That it possesses integrity, or in other words that it has all that pertains to its perfection, may be inferred from its spirituality, and also from the fact that it is a creation of the Divine Artist exclusively. He could not leave one of the highest and noblest of His works incomplete nor



inferior in appearance.

There is an admirable harmony or order about sanctifying grace. To begin with, it sets a person in just the right essential supernatural relation to God, and thus, at least indirectly, with respect to all other persons and things. Grace is also a principle of order within a man himself inasmuch as it is a source of supernatural moral order and propriety, and hence of beauty, in all his conduct. Moreover sanctifying grace possesses order within itself in the sense that it brings with itself and keeps in proportion all the infused moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. All these taken together constitute the supernatural organism, the anatomical basis, so to speak, of the supernatural life, and this organism must have a proportion and symmetry and harmony equal to its general excellence. Being spiritual, it must be superior to whatever is material; being of itself immortal and incorruptible, its beauty should be correspondingly great and lovely. Not only this, but since it is supernatural, its attractiveness should be higher and better than merely natural spiritual beauty. Oftentimes one of the principal sources of the satisfaction found in the esthetic contemplation of works of beauty is the perception of how the artist has really reached or approached the ideal which was evidently before his mind. In grace, which is a supernatural likeness of the divinity—in fact the highest possible likeness of it—the intended correspondence between the model or ideal and the real must be perfect and complete since God Himself is the artist who produces it.

That grace possesses brightness and adds a certain light to the soul that it adorns is abundantly evident from the fact that in all the literature on grace, whether ancient or modern, light is one of the analogues most commonly used to explain it. Thus the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*



says that grace is "a certain splendor and light, which blots out all the stains of our souls and makes those souls themselves more beautiful and splendid" (*On Baptism*, 50). Grace, therefore, has its own spiritual and supernatural integrity, harmony, and brightness, and as such is beautiful or fair to behold.

VI. Beauty as an effect of grace was a favorite theme with St. Bonaventure. He liked to conceive grace as making one a sort of spouse of God. Hence it was natural for St. Bonaventure to emphasize the adornment that grace confers and that high and special kind of beauty which becomes a spouse of God. It makes one so attractive and lovely in the sight of God that one becomes a fit object of divine complacency. "The king shall greatly desire thy beauty: for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore" (Psalm 44:12). "How beautiful art thou, and how comely, my dearest, in delights" (Canticle of Canticles 7:6).

VII. Among the lesser eventual effects of grace will be the resurrection and the beauty of the glorified body. "Then 'shall the just shine forth as the sun' in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). "The Lord Jesus Christ . . . will transform the body of our lowliness, that it may be one with the body of his glory, by the force of that power whereby he is able to subject all things to himself" (Philippians 3:21).

The physical beauty of the glorified body will be very great indeed, even in the case of those in whom it will be least, for instance, in the bodies of baptized infants who entered paradise with the lowest measure of grace, or in those sinners or converts who barely squeezed in at the last moment. "There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly is different from that of the earthly" (I Corinthians 15:40). Oftentimes,

if not too often, mortal human beauty is enough to enchant and transport men. It is the product of a merely natural process or of the cosmetician's art. Immortal human beauty will be the creation of the Infinite Artist Himself and such as befits the final and crowning state of His universe. The human beauty that we see here is only too evanescent; celestial human beauty will be eternal, forever adding to the delight of all who behold it. Human beauty in this life is granted indiscriminately to the good, bad, and indifferent, with the advantage rather in favor of the indifferent or bad, at least because they are more given to cultivating it. Glorified beauty is reserved for God's own elect and favorites. Beauty here is such as becomes this vale of tears; beauty there must be great enough to harmonize with the magnificence of the celestial mansions and the excellence of the persons who form the celestial society. The least beautiful glorified body should be at the minimum, it would seem, incomparably more lovely than the most beautiful body not yet glorified. What then of the most beautiful men and women in heaven?

The personal physical beauty, not only the spiritual, but particularly now that of the glorified bodies of the elect, will, like the beatific vision itself, be proportionate to the amount of grace with which they entered heaven. "There is the glory of the sun, and the glory of the moon, and the glory of the stars; for star differeth from star in glory. And so it is with the resurrection of the dead." (I Corinthians 15: 41, 42.) "In the final state such will be the subjection of the body to the soul that even the quality of the body will follow the excellence of the mind: whence according to the different degrees of merit one soul will be more worthy than another and one body more glorious than another" (St. Thomas, *In II Dist.* 21, q. 2, a. 1).

VIII. The practical conclusion from all these consid-

erations is that one who desires to possess the optimum quality and the maximum quantity of beauty, natural and supernatural, physical and moral, spiritual and bodily, who wishes to let the greatest number of the best persons enjoy it, and who would retain all that beauty for the longest time, should devote oneself to accumulating the highest possible measure of sanctifying grace. Moreover, the more grace one has, the keener will be one's vision and fruition of the infinite beauty of God Himself and of all the finite beauty, whether in persons or things, in heaven and throughout the whole universe, and that eternally.

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#### ENEMIES OF FAITH

The enemies of faith are two and they are closely related to each other, sin and worldliness. All sin but especially habits of sin obscure spiritual vision; make it hard for the mind to see God's full truth. Sin is a thing of darkness, and it loves the darkness to hide its shame. Worldliness, however, is perhaps the greater enemy of a living faith because more common, more plausible, more insidious seeing that its manifestations are not always obviously sinful. Worldliness is a cast of mind and a habit of will that ignore divine adoption; the blight of a naturalism that vitiates one's appraisals, one's likes and dislikes, all of one's habits of life as though one were not a son of God. Gradually but surely does it extinguish the light of the new knowledge to end in darkness and sin and disrelish for prayer and the beautiful realities of God.—F. X. McMENAMY, S.J., in *Alter Christus*.

## Newman and the Religious Life

Walter J. Ong, S.J.

**M**ANY religious, sensing beneath the writings of John Henry Cardinal Newman a character sympathetic to their way of life, must have asked themselves: Why did Newman not become a religious?

In this centenary year of his conversion, many will recall that for some time after Newman was received into the Church on October 9, 1845, he thought seriously about the religious life as a vocation for himself and for others of the group of Anglicans who came into the Church with him.

In a sense, he finally decided both for and against the religious state. A year and a half after his conversion, he chose, in the life devised by St. Philip Neri for his Oratorians, a place for himself half-way between that of the religious and that of the diocesan priest. For members of an Oratory of St. Philip Neri are priests, and assisting lay brothers, who live under obedience in a community. Nevertheless, they are not religious, for they live thus without public vows. The Oratorian community, compared to a religious community, is thus very loosely knit. Each member in great part provides for his own material needs out of his own resources, and each is free to leave should he wish to do so.

Why did Newman settle upon this kind of life?

### *Appeal of Religious Life?*

Was it because the religious life did not at all appeal to him? Some might suspect this. Indeed, with all the

writing there is about Newman, it would not be surprising if someone who likes to spade around in the subconscious has turned up a theory that Newman did not become a religious because the religious life demanded too much self-abnegation. Perhaps someone has. Interesting and even amusing texts could be quoted to support the theory. Let us quote a few.

### *Reactions to Religious Observance?*

In 1846, the year after their conversion, and before their ordination to the priesthood, Newman and his fellow-convert Ambrose St. John were to go to Rome, where they hoped to mature some definite plans for their future activity in the Church. At Rome they would stay at the Collegio di Propaganda, a seminary conducted by the Roman Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith. In this seminary, or college, studies were made by many of those destined for the priesthood in missionary countries, among which countries England, like America, was classed at the time. From a former student at the Collegio, a Dr. Ferguson, Newman had wormed out an advance description of the life there. His letter to St. John reporting what Dr. Ferguson had to say shows interesting reactions to matters touching the religious life:

Every quarter of an hour has its work and is measured out by rule. It is a Jesuit retreat continued through the year. You get up at half past five, having slept (by compulsion) seven and a half hours, at quarter to six you run into the passage and kneel down for the Angelus. Then you finish your dressing. At six you begin to meditate—the prefect going up and down and seeing you are at your work. Three minutes off the half hour a bell rings for the colloquium. At the half hour (half past six) mass—which every one attends in surplice. Seven breakfast, some bread and some milk and (I think) coffee. Then follow schools—at half past eleven dinner and so on. A compulsory walk for an hour and a half in the course

of the day.<sup>1</sup>

Newman calls attention to some details closely related to common life:

Recreation an hour after dinner and supper—but all recreate together—no private confabs. In like manner no one must enter any other person's room. (Corollary. It is no good two *friends* going to Propaganda.) . . . .

Further, your letters are all opened, and you put the letters you write into the Rector's hand. To continue—you must not have any pocket money . . . . "Then there is no good," I asked, "in taking money." "No," said Dr. F., "none at all."

Next, you may not have clothes of your own—the Rector takes away coat, trousers, shirts, stockings, &c. &c. and gives you some of the Propaganda's.

Although the Collegio was run to train not religious but diocesan priests, the details which Newman here singles out for comment include many which remain more or less a permanent part of the religious life. From the rueful tone of Newman's letter, one might gather that such details are listed because they show where the shoe pinched the most unbearably. Little wonder, one would say, that Newman did not become a religious. The life plainly did not at all appeal to him.

"They give you two cassocks," he goes on, "an old one and a new one." (Newman's own italics).

"To complete it, he [Dr. Ferguson] said that I should be kept there three years and that I should have to read Perrone." Reading Perrone seems to have been associated in Dr. Ferguson's mind only with feelings of the greatest terror. Perrone, well-known Italian theologian, was later to be Newman's friend and champion. But now Newman passes over Perrone's name without comment, having associated with the name nothing but the sinister overtones of

<sup>1</sup>Wilfrid Ward, *The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1913), I, 132. All quotations from this work are with the kind permission of the publishers.

Dr. Ferguson's woeful recollections.

"Meanwhile . . . we heard that at Rome . . . 'apartments' have been got ready at Propaganda for Dr. Wiseman and me." Newman must have shuddered as he wrote "apartments": at least he put the word in quotes.

"The only allowance I extracted from Dr. Ferguson," he continues, "was that you might have private papers in your writing desk . . . Dr. F. said one thing was provided gratis—snuff *ad libitum* and I should be allowed to take a snuffbox."

In the event, Newman was not subjected to the rules here described for the young seminarians. According to our projected theory, this should *prove* that he had no stomach for any life restrained by strict rule. His subconscious repugnance to restraint asserted itself here, and he somehow automatically edged his way around even temporary regular observance—this enterprising theory would hold. Other evidence could be scraped up out of Newman's letters to give body to such proof. For instance, shortly after his conversion he writes of a visit just paid to the Catholic college at Oscott:

Charles Woodmason and I . . . arrived here on the festival of St. Cecilia . . . We found the passage crowded and no servants to answer the bell, and had to poke in as we might, leaving our luggage at the entrance. I say they perhaps were scandalized, for they have the most absurd notions about us. I think they fancy I never eat, and I have just lost a good dinner in consequence. After returning from Birmingham walking and hungry, I literally have had to pick up a crust from the floor left at breakfast and eat it, from shame at asking again and again for things.<sup>2</sup>

Does this hankering for servants and victuals show the spirit of abnegation which the religious life demands? And the letter gets worse instead of better:

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, I, 103-104.

. . . . Well, we were ushered into the boys' dining room—the orchestra at the end, and the tables plentifully laden for all hearers with cake and (pro pudor) punch—a very sensible way of hearing music. They certainly were scandalized at my detecting the punch—for they said again and again that it was made of lemon and sugar. All I can say is that *ours* at the high table was remarkably stiff, and that I was obliged to dilute it to twice or thrice its quantity with water.

More of this kind of thing could be dug from Newman's correspondence, and one could turn it all to account to explain quite readily Newman's turning away from the religious state. His unconscious self had said from the first, "Don't be a religious," adding with standard subconscious hypocrisy, "but *talk* sometimes about the religious life so you'll get the credit for being interested in it." Thus Newman's attraction to the religious state was sham—the theory would conclude.

A good conclusion, if only it were true. Such a conclusion, however, would not be founded on fact, but rather on a wild misinterpretation of some of Newman's pleasantries. Indeed, the last passage just quoted hints that people had associated with Newman, not mere talk, but definite habits of abstemiousness quite in accord with the little sacrifices demanded by religious life.

### *Newman's Self-Abnegation*

As a matter of fact, Newman had such habits. An appetite for quite real self-abnegation in imitation of Christ had worked itself out very practically in Newman's life even before he entered the Catholic Church. In 1842 he had retired from Oxford to the neighboring town of Littlemore, where he gathered some of his Oxford friends. Here he became a Catholic and here he continued to live until February, 1846. We have an account of the place of retreat at Littlemore in a letter in the *Tablet* shortly after Newman's conversion written by Father Dominic, the



Italian Passionist who received him into the Church. "Littlemore," Father Dominic explains,

is a village about two or three miles from Oxford. It presents nothing charming in its aspect or situation, but is placed in a low, flat country; it exhibits no delightful villas, nor agreeable woods and meadows, but one unvaried uniform appearance, rather dull than pleasant. In the midst of this village we meet with a building, which has more the look of a barn than a dwelling house; and in reality, I think it formerly was a barn. This unsightly building is divided by a number of walls, so as to form so many little cells; and it is so low that you might almost touch the roof with your hand. In the interior you will find the most beautiful specimen of patriarchal simplicity and gospel poverty.<sup>3</sup>

The Italian was sensitive to the vagaries of the English weather and impressed by the sombreness of England's dark, damp days. Failure to take measures against such conditions was to him a sign of real mortification:

To pass from one cell to another, you must go through a little outside corridor, covered indeed with tiles, but open to all inclemencies of the weather. At the end of this corridor, you find a small dark room, which has served as an oratory.

The furnishings and diet impressed him most of all.

In the cells nothing is to be seen but poverty and simplicity—bare walls, floors composed of a few rough bricks, without carpet, a straw bed, one or two chairs, and a few books, this comprises the whole furniture ! ! ! The refectory and kitchen are in the same style, all very small and very poor. From this description one may easily guess what sort of diet was used at table; no delicacies, no wine, no ale, no liquors, but seldom meat; all breathing an air of the strictest poverty, such I have never witnessed in any religious house in Italy or France, or in any other country where I have been. A Capuchin monastery would appear a great palace when compared with Littlemore.

It is the "best geniuses of the Anglican Church" who have retired to this house, Father Dominic goes on, and have lived there—persons "of birth, learning, and piety,

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, I, 106-107.

who possessed, or at least might have possessed, the richest livings and fellowships which the Church of England can bestow." And yet it had been said that their living as they had at Littlemore was due to singularity and pride! "Those who entertain such an idea," the good father continues, "might in the same way calumniate our Blessed Saviour, his Apostles, and all the followers of the Gospel." For it was plain to any open-eyed observer that the life at Littlemore was undertaken in imitation of Christ.

The holy and simple Italian priest, as Newman's biographer Wilfrid Ward calls Father Dominic, gets so excited at the blindness and malice of Newman's critics that he breaks into a regular litany of puns: "O men, O Englishmen," he almost chants as he concludes his letter to the *Tablet*,

hear the voice of Littlemore. Those walls bear testimony that the Catholic is a *little more* than the Protestant Church, the soul a *little more* than the body, eternity a *little more* than the present time. Understand well this *little more*, and I am sure you will do a *little more* for your eternal salvation.

This is apparently what made Newman, who was undoubtedly embarrassed by the good father's letter, remark that no one at Littlemore could read the letter with a grave face. But Newman does not contest the facts which Father Dominic had set down.

### *Newman and the English Scene*

Littlemore shows in some ways a greater attraction to a life of self-abnegation and self-surrender than perhaps most religious exhibit before their novitiate. But Littlemore provides us as well with the key to Newman's final decision against the religious life. For Littlemore was the place where Newman retired to learn God's will in his regard, and there were good signs that the will of God called him elsewhere than to a religious institute.

Had he been at the time of his conversion a young man, Newman might perhaps have entered a religious institute and let his life be shaped there, just as Gerard Manley Hopkins was to do. Hopkins, an Oxford man like Newman and destined like Newman to become a great figure in nineteenth-century literature, was converted at the age of twenty-two. But Newman (who incidentally, was to be the one to receive Hopkins into the Church in 1866) was forty-four when he became a Catholic. He had already cut himself a niche in English life. He had been the leader of a party which had split open the intellectual world of Oxford and with it the Anglican Church; and, although the party had finally been badly routed by the liberal Anglicans at the time it lost many of its leaders to Rome, Newman's place in the Oxford movement had made him a marked man in England. And here we have the basic reason why Newman did not turn to the religious state: he felt that his value to the Church, a value already fixed by his place in England's life, could not be best exploited there.

### *Being Taught God's Will*

Writing many years later to young Edmund Froude, who had rather precipitately made up his mind to be a religious, Newman said, "I know you are a prudent boy, and I wish you gravely and continually to pray God, that you may be *taught* His Will as regards you. For we must persevere in prayer, if we would learn it."<sup>4</sup> Newman himself had had to persevere in prayer to be taught God's will in his regard and this not only with regard to entering the true Church. For a year and a half after his conversion there was an interval of prayerful searching, as both Newman and his friends, eager to find what place God had marked out for them, felt their way about the edifice of the

<sup>4</sup>Gordon Huntington Harper, *Cardinal Newman and William Froude, F. R. S., A Correspondence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), p. 169.

Church, in which they were at the same time very much at home and strangely unconvertant with many ordinary things.

They were at home because they were indeed in their Father's house, about which they had been reading all their lives in the Scriptures and in patristic writings. But, however much at home they felt, the fact was, their Father's house or no, they had never been in it before. For this reason Newman and Ambrose St. John went from England to Rome in 1846 to improve their knowledge of the Church from the inside. It is a little amusing to see them cautiously smelling out different theological schools at Rome or still indulging in themselves something of the amazement of the benevolent Protestant who has just found that the Catholic clergy are not such a bad lot after all.

In this vein, Newman, en route to Rome, writes delightedly from Langres in France to his friend Frederick Bowles that the French clergy

are a merry, simple, affectionate set—some of them quite touchingly kind and warm-hearted towards me, and only one complaining, as I think he did, of English heaviness (our stomachs were in fault) . . . M. Lamont is very cheerful, and talks Latin well, which few of the other clergy do. The Dean does, and is a kind warmhearted person.<sup>5</sup>

During this time when he was gaining familiarity with the Church from inside her doors, Newman was in close contact with many religious—Dominicans, Passionists, Jesuits, Franciscans, and others. He had a Jesuit confessor at Rome. And Newman was certainly thinking of the various religious institutes in terms of his usefulness in Christ's cause: "It is one especial benefit in the Catholic Church," he writes from Rome to Henry Wilberforce, that a person's usefulness does not depend on the accident of its

<sup>5</sup>Ward, *Life*, I, 136.

being found out. There are so many ready-formed modes of usefulness, great institutions, and orders with great privileges and means of operation, that he has but to unite himself to one of them, and it is as if Pope and Cardinals took him up personally.<sup>6</sup>

Newman adds a remark which shows that he was thinking of the religious life as a sort of refuge from possible ecclesiastical honors:

Since I am in for it, I will add, what (as far as I know) I have never told to anyone—that, before now, my prayers have been so earnest that I never might have dignity or station, that, as they have been heard as regards the English Church, I think they will be heard now also.

They were. No honors threatened for many weary years, but rather failure and misunderstanding.

### *Special Responsibilities*

But from the time of his conversion Newman was conscious that he might have "special responsibilities" which would not leave his choice of a state of life entirely free. He was afraid that these responsibilities might not be discovered for him even in Rome. "I can't tell as yet," he informs Wilberforce in the same letter,

what they will make of me here, or whether they will find me out. It is very difficult to get into the mind of a person like me, especially considering so few speak English . . . and I can say so little in Italian. Newman and St. John had indeed picked up Italian only in their leisurely journey down through Italy to Rome—picked it up not without some disaster, as when, meaning to tell a departing Italian acquaintance in Milan that he hoped to see him in the winter, St. John blundered confidently onto the word *inferno* for *inverno* and succeeded only in leaving the startled Italian with the understanding that the English visitor hoped to see him soon in hell.

Newman was delighted at this occurrence, for St. John

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, I, 151.

was the greater enthusiast for the language. But when they got to Rome and Newman could pick his way only rather gingerly through an Italian conversation, he felt that he was greatly handicapped in his efforts to find his proper place within the Church. Newman wanted information and advice. But "what can people know of me?" he goes on to Wilberforce,

. . . I don't expect people will know me. The consequence will be, that, instead of returning with any special responsibilities upon me, any special work to do, I should on my return slink into some ready-formed plan of operation, and if I did not become a friar or a Jesuit, I should go on humdrumming in some theological seminary or the like.

Thus Newman felt that, *for him*, fitting into a ready-made plan might indeed be "slinking"—dodging the "special responsibility." In accordance with this line of thought, the conviction that he should not join a religious institute finally won out, as it had threatened to do from the first. He writes to Dalgairns from Rome on the last day of the year 1846:

I have the greatest fear I am bamboozling myself when I talk of an order; and that, just as Anglicans talk of being Catholics but draw back when it comes to the point, so I, at my time of life, shall never feel able to give up property and take to new habits.<sup>7</sup>

But the repugnance to giving up property was no greater, certainly, for Newman than for many who have embraced the religious life, and it was not this repugnance which decided him in the course he took. He goes on:

Not that I should not do it [enter a religious institute], had I a *clear* call—but it is so difficult to know what a clear call is. I do not know enough of the rule of the different congregations to have any opinion yet—and again I do not think I could, religiously, do anything that Dr. Wiseman disapproved.

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<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, I, 170.

*Final Reasons for the Oratory*

Even with this protestation of ignorance concerning the rules of religious institutes, Newman sets down at this time the reasons which were ultimately to determine—indeed, were already determining—his choice. In thinking of a regular life, he continues, a

great difficulty . . . is my own previous history. When it comes upon me how late I am trying to serve the Church, the obvious answer is, Even saints, such as St. Augustine, St. Ignatius, did not begin in earnest till a late age. "Yes, but I am much older than they." So then I go on to think and to trust that my past life may form a sort of *aphorme* [base of operations] and a ground of future usefulness. Having lived so long in Oxford, my name and person are known to a very great many people I do not know—so are my books—and I may have begun a work which I am now to finish. Now the question is whether as a regular I do not at once cut off all this, as becoming a sort of instrument of others, and so clean beginning life again. As a Jesuit e.g. no one would know that I was speaking my own words: or was a *continuation*, as it were, of my former self.

Newman goes on to set down a notion which he had thought worthwhile mentioning to Bishop Wiseman, that he and his associates should be a group or college in England dependent on Propaganda, which still administered England in place of a regular hierarchy. "This," Newman concludes, "would not be inconsistent with being Oratorians."

By the beginning of the year 1847 Newman and a group of his friends had fixed on the Oratory of St. Philip as their place in the Church—the place where prayer and common sense and the wishes of their ecclesiastical superiors made it plain that God wanted them. In the spring of 1847 Newman, St. John, W. Goodenough Penny, J. D. Dalgairns, Robert Coffin, Richard Stanton, and F. S. Bowles began a brief novitiate at Rome, and in January of the following year the first English Oratorian community



began to assemble at Birmingham under a rule adapted slightly to the demands of life in England.

*Newman's Choice and Providence*

The event proved that Newman's calculations were valid, that his patient and prayerful search had effectively laid his life in the hands of Providence. For it was to the best interests of Christ's Kingdom that Newman should remain preeminently an individual in the minds of the English people. The English never succeeded in understanding Newman the Catholic. They would never even have tried to understand Newman the religious—the member of some weird and superstitious posse of the Pope's. But with Newman the individual they could at least try to sympathize.

And that is how Newman won his countrymen in his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, diverting the currents of feeling which swirled confusedly about him into channels friendly to the Church. In 1845 and 1846 and 1847 Newman could not see ahead to the *Apologia*, in which he was to lay bare the history of his religious convictions and justify his conversion to Catholicity. But in the Providence of God, which calls some to one kind of life and some to another, "disposing all things sweetly," he took the step in 1847 which made the *Apologia* possible and turned his life from a long series of failures into a great spiritual success.

Had he become a religious, Newman would have had the same story to tell as he tells in the *Apologia*. But, as he shrewdly foresaw in 1846, no one would have believed that he was speaking his own words. In the Oratory of St. Philip, only loosely tied to his associates, he remained in the popular mind Newman, the individual Englishman. That made possible the work which God had for him to do.



## Why Does Father Ask Questions?

Gerald Kelly, S.J.

**D**URING the years of his seminary training, the young priest-to-be is thoroughly instructed in the duties of those who go to confession and is also made acquainted with some of the principal difficulties that his future penitents might experience. This is as it should be. The priest should be able to help and sympathize with his penitents. But that is only one side of the picture. The confessor-penitent relationship is mutual; and, particularly from the point of view of the penitent, it is perhaps the most profoundly intimate relationship in the world. The penitent often reveals things to the confessor that he would not disclose to anyone else, even his dearest friend. It seems logical, therefore, that the penitent ought to know something of the duties and problems of the confessor.

Catholics do know, in a rather vague way, something of the confessor's duties and difficulties. They know that he hears their sins as the ambassador of God and that he is bound by the most rigid and sacred secrecy possible. And they can readily understand that long hours in the confessional must be tiresome and must create a special difficulty with regard to the practice of such virtues as patience and kindness. But there are many things that they do not understand; and one of these seems to be the asking of questions by the confessor.

If we may judge from remarks heard in conversations about confession, we may conclude that penitents fall into three rather general classes with respect to being questioned by the confessor. Some penitents rather like it because it

makes their own task easier and makes them more satisfied that their confession was good. Others definitely resent questioning; they want to say what they have to say and then be allowed to go in peace. Still others neither like nor resent the questioning, but among these many wonder why questions are asked. All these classes of penitents—and of course all who teach catechism and instruct others how to go to confession—would very likely profit by a knowledge of some of the reasons why the priest questions them; and if they knew these reasons they would very likely try to improve their methods of going to confession and thus avoid the necessity of questions.

As a *judge* in the place of Christ, the priest gives absolution to a worthily-disposed sinner and refuses absolution to the sinner who is not sufficiently disposed. This is the most important office of the confessor; but it is not his only function. He is also a *physician*, with the duty of healing the wounds of sin and prescribing remedies for the future; he is, to some extent, a *teacher*, with the duty of instructing the ignorant; and he is the spiritual *father* to his penitent, with the duty of giving paternal admonitions, counsel, and encouragement. In each and all of these capacities, the priest might find reasons for questioning penitents. I cannot discuss all these reasons here; but I should like to call attention to those that might be most common or most important.

### *Sufficient Matter?*

For the instruction of seminarians and for the help of priests, moral theologians sometimes prepare what they call "case books"—that is, books of practical problems that the priest is likely to encounter in his ministry. To make the problem concrete, it is proposed in the form of a fictitious incident. The student is to decide what he would do

under the circumstances; then he can check his solution with the solution offered by the author of the book.

I can illustrate the first reason why a priest might ask questions by two sample confessions taken from one of these case books. The first confession is that of a devout woman named Eudoxia. "I never detract others, as many women do," Eudoxia tells her confessor. "I have had to listen to men blaspheme, but I told them I disapprove of their language. And I forgot to say my morning prayers several times."

That, according to the case book, is Eudoxia's entire confession. Not a real sin is mentioned; and there is no concluding accusation of the sins of her past life. So far as absolution is concerned, Eudoxia might just as well be a newly baptized baby. But there is this profound difference between Eudoxia and the baby: the baby has not sinned, whereas Eudoxia—unless she has the special privilege given to Our Lady—most certainly has committed some small sins, at least in her past life. The confessor's problem is to get her to confess a sin.

"Perhaps you have told some small lies, or given way to impatience, or committed some other small sins, like sins of vanity?" the confessor asks Eudoxia. Most of us, I am sure, would call this an easy, safe approach. There is nothing particularly opprobrious about these sins, and even very good people occasionally fall into them. But not Eudoxia! "Far be it from me, Father," she replies firmly, ever to commit any of those sins!"

With that we can leave Eudoxia to her confessor. He may try to explain to her how all people commit some small sins, and that in her case it is just a matter of recognizing the sins and perhaps of examining her conscience more carefully. He might even indicate that she could get some valuable information about herself from those "other

women" of whom she spoke in her confession or from those men who blasphemed in her presence. But he may not and cannot give absolution until he knows there is something to absolve. Virtues, mere imperfections, involuntary acts, and doubtful sins (for example: "I accuse myself in so far as I am guilty") are not sufficient matter for absolution; and if a confession consists *entirely* of such things, the confessor simply has to ask questions.

Another sample confession, taken from the same case book, will illustrate the problem of insufficient matter under a slightly different aspect. This time the penitent is a man, whose Latin name is best translated by Goodfellow.

"Father," runs Goodfellow's confession, "I haven't anything to confess except that I frequently had impure thoughts and once, when I was traveling, I missed Mass on Sunday."

That is the whole of Goodfellow's confession. He seems to be a man of few deeds and fewer words. The principal difference between his and Eudoxia's confessions is that Eudoxia clearly confessed no sins, whereas Goodfellow may be confessing real sins. Every confessor learns, after some little experience, that the accusation, "I had impure thoughts," does not necessarily mean sin. It could mean that the penitent committed a mortal sin against purity; but it could also mean that the penitent was merely tempted against purity—in other words, that the thoughts were entirely involuntary and not at all culpable. And the same may be said for Goodfellow's failure to hear Mass. Devout people sometimes confess "missing Mass," even when they had a broken leg. They do not really mean that they sinned; they merely feel better when they tell the confessor about it. Goodfellow might be one of these devout people; perhaps his journey made it impossible to hear Mass and he knew this was no sin.

If Goodfellow's impure thoughts were involuntary and he had a good excuse or thought he had a good excuse for missing Mass, his confession is the same as Eudoxia's: it contains no real sin. Strictly speaking, things like this should not be confessed unless one wishes to get some advice about them; but if the penitent does confess them, he should indicate that they were not sins and should include in his confession some other matter for absolution. Otherwise the confessor must ask questions.

### *Mortal or Venial Sin?*

Even if Goodfellow's impure thoughts were really sinful, there would still be a further problem for the confessor. He has to judge, in so far as this is reasonably possible, whether the penitent committed a venial sin or a mortal sin; and this judgment is particularly difficult to make with regard to such things as internal sins. As I said before, the accusation, "I had impure thoughts," may refer merely to a temptation, in which case it would be no sin at all. But it could also mean that the penitent was guilty of some negligence in getting rid of impure thoughts—and this, though it would be a venial sin, is a far cry from full consent and deliberate mortal sin.

All of us learned (or were supposed to learn) in catechism class that a full-fledged mortal sin must have three elements: serious matter, sufficient reflection, and full consent of the will. In some types of accusations a confessor can readily presume that all these elements were present; but in many others he must ask a question or two to determine whether the matter was really serious or whether there was sufficient reflection and full consent. It is often very difficult, even after questioning, to form a judgment regarding reflection and consent; and it can happen that both the penitent and the confessor will have to leave the judgment to God.

But they are not supposed to "leave it to God" without making some reasonable effort to decide it for themselves.

I might mention here that the judgment concerning degree of guilt is not nearly so important as the judgment concerning sufficiency of matter. A mistake concerning sufficient matter (for example: if the confessor judged that the confession contained real sin when not even a real venial sin was included in the accusation) would make the absolution invalid, even though the penitent, being in good faith, would commit no sin. But a mistake in judging the degree of guilt (for example: by judging a sin to be mortal when it was only venial, or vice versa) would not affect the validity of the absolution.

### *The Law of Integrity*

Reminiscing on catechism days will also bring to our minds the law of Christ that *all* mortal sins must be confessed according to species and number: in other words, the exact kind of sin committed and the exact number of times each sin was committed, in so far as the penitent can tell these details, must be confessed. If the priest notices that this law is not being kept, he must prudently help the penitent by questions. The man who has committed murder does not satisfy this obligation by merely saying that he violated the Fifth Commandment, because there are many ways of violating that Commandment; and if he murdered his brother he would not satisfy his obligation by saying that he had killed a man, because homicide and fratricide are different kinds of sins. Finally, if we make the wild supposition that he had seven brothers and that he murdered them all, he would not fulfill the law of integral confession by simply saying that he had murdered his brothers, because he is supposed to tell how many mortal sins he committed.

I realize that homicide and fratricide are not the regular subject-matter for confessions. A Commandment that would probably touch the lives of ordinary people more closely would be the Sixth. And the confession of sins against this Commandment presents special difficulties for both penitent and confessor. Penitents find the confession of sins of impurity embarrassing, and they would naturally like to keep their accusation as general as possible. Furthermore, they often do not know just how to express themselves, perhaps because they feel that they do not know the proper terms to be used in the confessional. As for the confessor, it is easily seen how he might find the questioning of penitents concerning sins of impurity a particularly delicate matter. The best solution to the mutual embarrassment problem is to have the penitent try to keep the law of integrity by confessing in his own words the kind of sin he committed. The confession should be brief and to the point. The confessor can hardly fail to understand; and thus the need of questions, at least on this score, will be avoided. Of course, there are penitents who prefer to be questioned in this matter because they find it too difficult to express themselves without help. These penitents should at least mention their inability to the confessor and ask for his assistance.

### *True Contrition?*

A very important—in fact, an essential—judgment to be made by the confessor concerns the penitent's disposition. Practically speaking, this means that before giving absolution the confessor must judge that his penitent has true contrition, at least imperfect contrition. Absolution cannot be valid if the penitent has not this minimum disposition.

Generally speaking, of course, the presumption is that



people do not confess their sins unless they are sorry for them. But this presumption admits of many exceptions, as the moral theologians are careful to point out. For instance, there is the case of the penitent who has been practically forced to confession by wife, mother, or teacher. It is true that even under such circumstances a good confession can be made; but there is a very real danger that such confessions might be insincere and that genuine contrition and desire for absolution might be lacking. Another difficulty that might make for defective contrition is lack of instruction. Great moralists like St. Alphonsus Liguori point out that many simple people are apt to get the habit of going to confession without really appreciating the need of contrition, especially with reference to purpose of amendment.

In all cases like the above, where the confessor has a reasonable suspicion that contrition is lacking or defective, he must ask a question or two. And besides these general difficulties there are certain specific problems concerning which he must be especially careful. Among these specific cases a most important one is that of the penitent with a habit of serious sin.

The habitual sinner is apt to have a very vague and ineffective purpose of amendment. In a general way he wants to break his habit, but he fails to decide on any definite way of doing so. Strong habits are not broken in that way. One must try to find the reason for his habit and try to remove that reason. The habit may be the result of his own weakness; and in this case he must take some means to strengthen himself. Or the habit may be connected with an occasion of sin; and in this event some very drastic measures may have to be taken with regard to the occasion. These are basic points concerning habits of sin; yet the penitent may be ignorant of them and unconscious of his need for



help. And even if he feels his need very acutely, even if he is dreadfully discouraged—a not uncommon effect of habits of impurity—he may be too timid to ask for help; hence, if the confessor does not take the initiative, great harm may result.

Even when a habitual sinner shows good will his problem is apt to be a difficult one, because it is not always easy to determine the exact cause of the trouble and to prescribe an immediately effective remedy. But the difficulty is much more serious when the penitent manifests a lack of sincerity: for example, if he returns to the same confessor again and again without having made any attempt to follow advice, or if he goes from one confessor to another in order to find an "easy" one or to avoid the need of giving an account of himself. Human nature is prone to seek the easy way, and the very law of the Church which allows penitents a choice of confessors can be abused in such a way as to defeat the purpose of confession. Knowing these things, the confessor cannot omit questions when he notices or has a solid reason for suspecting that his penitent is insincere.

### *Other Reasons for Questions*

Thus far I have given the principal reasons why a confessor might feel obliged to ask questions: namely, to determine if there is sufficient matter for absolution; to decide the degree of sinfulness; to help the penitent to make a complete confession; to test the penitent's disposition; and to give needed advice and encouragement. Another very important reason is his desire to correct a false conscience. These and similar purposes all fall within the scope of his sublime office as minister of the sacrament—as judge, physician, teacher, and spiritual father. And to these we might add the simpler and more natural reasons, such as the fact that he does not hear what is said, or that

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he is not sure he catches the penitent's meaning. And finally, the confessor is not exempt from such difficulties as distractions and sleepiness. His mind may wander, and his head may nod! If penitents were to keep all these things in mind, they would not resent questions, but they would try to make their confessions sufficiently clear and complete to allow the confessor to keep his questions to the minimum. No doubt it is true that occasionally unnecessary and even useless questions are asked; but this is not the rule. Questioning penitents is seldom pleasant.

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### Books Received

(From April 20 to June 20)

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO., INC., London, New York, Toronto.

*Enjoying the New Testament.* By Margaret T. Monro. \$2.50.

THE BRUCE PUBLISHING CO., Milwaukee.

*A Dynamic World Order.* By Rt. Rev. Msgr. Donald A. Mac Lean, A. M., S.T.L., Ph.D. \$2.50. *Weapons for Peace.* By Thomas P. Neill. \$2.50.

CATECHETICAL GUILD, St. Paul, Minn.

*That You May Live.* By L. F. Cervantes, S.J. \$2.00.

SOCIETY OF SISTERS OF THE HOLY NAMES, Marylhurst, Oregon.

*The Hope of the Harvest.* By a Sister of the Holy Names. \$4.00 (plus postage).

FREDERICK PUSTET CO., INC., New York.

*Meditations on Eternity for Religious.* By the Venerable Mother Julianne Morell, O.P. \$2.50.

B. HERDER BOOK CO., St. Louis.

*A Retreat for Religious.* By Rev. Andrew Green, O.S.B. \$2.00. *Christian Denominations.* By Rev. Konrad Algermissen. \$7.50.

MOTHERHOUSE OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, Convent Heights, New Britain,

Conn. *Daily Progress in Religious Virtues.* By Rev. John Pitrus, S.T.D. \$1.60.

## Perfection Is Union with God

Augustine Klaas, S.J.

**WE OFTEN HEAR** it said that spiritual perfection is union with God and that the more intimate this union is, the greater our perfection. The statement is true; but is there not frequently some haziness of mind as to just what is meant by union with God and how it pertains to perfection? Let us examine various kinds of union with God and their relation to spiritual perfection.

### *Hypostatic Union with God*

The closest union of our human nature with the divine is had in Jesus Christ by reason of the hypostatic union, that is, the union of the divine and human natures of Christ in the Person of the Word. One Person, the Son of God, having a divine nature from all eternity, took to Himself a human nature like our very own from the flesh of Mary, and by a virginal birth became also the son of Mary. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Or as Pope Saint Leo the Great graphically expresses it: "the Wisdom of God built a house in the flesh which He took from a human being, and which He animated with a rational soul." The human nature of Christ ever remains distinct from the divine, but the two natures are *substantially* united in the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. This is the closest possible union of our human nature with God.

Such an intimate, substantial union of the human and the divine is had in Jesus Christ alone, for revelation tells of only one hypostatic union. It were blasphemy to say that in our pursuit of perfection we could ever attain to such an

immediate union with God. We cannot even understand its character fully since it is an ineffable mystery. Before it we can only bow our heads in faith, in adoration, and in gratitude, too, because from the hypostatic union comes not only our sublime Model of perfection, but also from it, as from a fountainhead, flow all our grace, justification, incorporation into the Mystical Body, spiritual perfection, and ultimately our everlasting union with God in heaven.

### *Union with God in Heaven*

The blessed in heaven are intimately united to God. This union of our human nature with the divine is not substantial, like the previous one, but only *accidental*. Called the beatific vision, it is an immediate intuitive perception of the essence of God resulting in love and a satiating joy and bliss that will last forever. Aided by the "light of glory," the blessed see God face to face. "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face" (I Corinthians 13:12). And because of this direct vision of God the blessed love God to their utmost and are supremely happy for all eternity. They can neither increase nor diminish this union, since their time of probation is over. They are home at last in their Father's house.

However, union with God in heaven is not had by all the blessed in the same degree, for "there are many mansions" in our celestial abode. What determines its degree? The degree of our vision of God and of our capacity for love and happiness hereafter is in direct proportion to the sanctifying grace, merit, and spiritual perfection we have acquired in this life. In other words, the degree of our union with God in heaven is measured wholly by the degree of our union with God on earth.

### *Union with God on Earth*

On earth we are united to God by *sanctifying grace*.

Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical on the Holy Spirit explains this union as follows:

No one can express the greatness of this work of divine grace in the souls of men. Wherefore, both in Holy Scripture and in the writings of the Fathers, men are styled regenerated, new creatures, partakers of the Divine Nature, children of God, godlike, and similar epithets. Now these great blessings are justly considered as especially belonging to the Holy Spirit . . . He not only brings to us His Divine gifts, but is the Author of them and is Himself the supreme Gift . . .

To show the nature and efficacy of this gift it is well to recall the explanation given by the Doctors of the Church of the words of Holy Scripture. They say that God is present and exists in all things by His power, in so far as all things are subject to His power; by His presence, inasmuch as all things are uncovered and open to His eyes; by His essence, inasmuch as He is present to all as the cause of their being (St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica* I, Q. 8, Art. 3). But God is in man, not just as in lifeless things, but in the further way that He is also known and loved by him, since even by nature we spontaneously love, desire and seek after the good.

Moreover, God by grace resides in the just soul as in a temple, in a most intimate and peculiar manner. From this proceeds that union of affection by which the soul adheres closely to God, more so than the friend is united to his most loving and beloved friend, and enjoys God in all fulness and sweetness. Now this wonderful union, which is properly called "indwelling," differing only in degree or state from that with which God beatifies the saints in Heaven, although it is most certainly produced by the presence of the whole Blessed Trinity—"We will come to him, and will make our abode with him" (John 14:23)—nevertheless is attributed in a peculiar manner to the Holy Spirit.

Habitual union with God present in the soul in a peculiar way through sanctifying grace is of the very essence of spiritual perfection in this world, since without sanctifying grace we are supernaturally and spiritually dead. On the other hand, the more sanctifying grace is increased in our souls by the worthy reception of the sacraments, especially of the Holy Eucharist, and by the assiduous practice of the

virtues, principally charity, the more intimate becomes our habitual union with God and the greater our spiritual perfection. When we shall have acquired the maximum sanctifying grace we are capable of, granted our particular, individual opportunities of nature and of grace, then we shall have attained to the closest habitual union with God and the highest perfection. This fundamental, essential perfection spiritual writers sometimes call *static perfection*.

There is still another union with God flowing almost spontaneously from the preceding one—active union. Active union with God is called *dynamic perfection* and is what we ordinarily mean when we speak of spiritual perfection. It consists in union with God by mind and will activity.

#### *Union with God by Mind Activity*

Active union with God through intellect is had by thinking of God, by acquiring more and more knowledge of Him and His divine attributes from the double source of reason and supernatural faith. Such knowledge of God is highly praised in Holy Scripture: "For to know thee is perfect justice: and to know thy justice, and thy power, is the root of immortality" (Wisdom 15:3). And Saint Paul: "Furthermore I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my lord (Philippians 3:8) . . . in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). Among the Fathers of the Church, did not Saint Augustine epitomize the whole of the spiritual life as an ever increasing knowledge of self and of God?

By knowledge of God is here meant not merely *theoretical* knowledge, *scientific* knowledge, knowledge of God acquired chiefly by the study of philosophy and theology, book knowledge, if you will. *Practical* knowledge of God,

that is, knowledge inducing will activity, is still more important. Let us evaluate knowledge of God with reference to perfection.

Theoretical knowledge of God is excellent. It can be, and frequently is, a puissant help and incentive to spiritual perfection. However, it must be asserted that while such knowledge provides a useful solid basis for perfection, it does not constitute our spiritual perfection, nor even indicate the degree of perfection we may possess. Have there not been saints, like Benedict Labre and Bernadette Soubirous, whose scientific theoretical knowledge of God was very meager? On the other hand, do we not sometimes see students of theology, who have a very superior knowledge of God and work at it all day long, leading imperfect lives? The fallen angels have an excellent theoretical knowledge of God, but they are the very opposite of perfect.

Eminent theologians warn us that perfection does not consist in union with God by mind activity alone, even a great deal of it. "Tell me, dear Father," said Brother Giles one day to the learned Saint Bonaventure, "can a simple, uneducated person love God as much as a scholar?" "Yes," replied Bonaventure, "a simple, little old grandmother can love God more than a master of theology." Whereupon, we are told, guileless Brother Giles rose up, rushed out through the garden and along the streets of the town crying at the top of his voice: "O poor, ignorant, simple old grandmother, love God! You can still overtake Brother Bonaventure." If this is true, what the little old grandmother probably had was not so much a theoretical as a practical, a "realized" knowledge of God, a knowledge leading to the firm judgment and deep conviction: "I must value and love God above all else." Upon this practical mind activity can be built the loftiest perfection, but in itself it still is not the union with God that is equated with spiritual perfection.

Hence, while we must greatly esteem knowledge of God, both theoretical and practical, and strive constantly and perseveringly to increase it, by meditation, by spiritual reading, by delving deeper into the truths of faith, by often recalling the presence of God, by recollection, and the like, we must not remain content with only that. If we would be perfect we must pass from union with God by mere mind activity to something beyond, to something still more precious, to union with God by will activity, by love. Saint Teresa of Avila says that clearly when discussing union with God in her *Foundations* (chapter 5): "The soul's advancement does not consist in thinking much, but in loving much." Our spiritual perfection is measured, therefore, not by our knowledge of God, even though it be the knowledge of strong supernatural faith, but rather by our active love of Him. That is why Saint Thomas can say that "the love of those things which are above us, and especially of God, is to be preferred to the knowledge of them; wherefore charity is more excellent than faith" (*Summa* II-II, Q. 23, Art. 6). And so the little old grandmother could probably never overtake the saintly Doctor of the Church by her mind activity, even her practical mind activity; she could overtake him by her will, by her union with God through will activity, by her active love of God.

### *Union with God by Will Activity*

Presupposing in the soul a close union with God through sanctifying grace and a certain necessary union with Him through mind activity, we maintain that spiritual perfection consists above all in union with God by will activity, that is, by active love of God. Supernatural faith and hope must be present in the soul, but we are perfect in proportion as we love God more; and when we have



attained the maximum active love of God we are capable of with the assistance of grace, then we have reached the very summit of the mount of perfection. Active love is the norm and gauge of spiritual perfection. We are just as perfect as we are united to God by active love of Him.

Such is the unanimous teaching of Catholic theologians, as for instance, Saint Thomas, who states in his *Perfection of Spiritual Life* that "the spiritual life consists principally in charity . . . He is simply perfect in the spiritual life who is perfect in charity." It is the teaching of the Fathers of the Church who agree with Saint Augustine when he informs us in his work *On Nature and Grace* that "incipient charity is incipient justice [justice here means holiness]; advanced charity is advanced justice; great charity is great justice; perfect charity is perfect justice." It is the teaching of Saint Paul (I Corinthians 13). It is the explicit teaching of Christ Himself: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matthew 22:37-39.) And again: "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). And Saint John explains: "God is charity . . ." (I John 4:16).<sup>1</sup>

### *Degrees of Union with God*

Spiritual masters have made many attempts to give us the ascending scale of degrees in this unifying love of God and the characteristics that mark each degree. They are at variance in detail; fundamentally, however, they are in accord, for the main landings on the grand stairway leading to the highest love of God are pretty well known and agreed upon by all. There are three such landings or degrees of

<sup>1</sup>For a fuller treatment of this point, cf. *Review for Religious*, Vol. I, pp. 238 sqq.

union with God through love.

In the first the soul is so united to God and loves Him to such a degree that it *habitually* avoids all mortal sin and the occasions of grave sin. It has a nascent but still feeble desire for greater perfection; it still commits many venial sins, but it struggles valiantly and successfully against strong temptations. Penance for the past, purification, and mortification characterize this rather negative degree. Its prayer is mainly discursive meditation on the fundamental truths of faith, particularly the four last things. This is the degree of beginners in the life of perfection and it is called the Purgative Way.

In the second degree, the soul not only avoids all mortal sin, but *habitually* rejects deliberate venial sin. It makes advances in detachment from creatures and has an increasing desire for perfection. The degree is more positive than negative, since the emphasis is on the acquirement of the virtues, especially by the imitation of and assimilation to Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life." The prayer in this degree tends to be predominantly affective. It is the degree of those advancing in perfection; it is called the Illuminative Way.

Presupposing the habitual practice of the other two, the third degree is marked by the struggle to reduce semi-deliberate venial sins and imperfections to the minimum. The soul has made great strides towards heroic detachment and is now intent on the maximum practice of the counsels and works of supererogation. Its manner of praying becomes more and more simple, contemplation of God's attributes being a favorite form in this degree. Intense charity permeates all its activity, since it now lives for God alone. This is the Unitive Way.

Of course, these degrees cannot be rigidly delimited. Nor does the soul leave one degree and proceed to the next

mechanically; it may be and generally is to some extent in all degrees at once. For example, in order to keep oneself habitually from mortal sin, does one not have to observe a certain number of the counsels? Is the soul in the third degree exempt from doing penance? The whole matter is one of emphasis, and according to the *predominance* of the various qualities noted above, a soul can be easily placed in one of the three degrees. Moreover, the third degree admits of indefinite progress, since we can never love God as much as He can be loved, and hence, our union with Him can ever become more intimate as long as we live on this earth.

### *Perfect and Imperfect Love of God*

From the restricted viewpoint of nobility of motive two kinds of active love of God may be distinguished. We can love God above all else because He is *good to us*. Such is the love of God indicated by the Psalmist when he exclaims: "For thee my flesh and my heart hath fainted away; thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion forever" (Psalms 72:26). And again: "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength: the Lord is my firmament, my refuge, and my deliverer . . ." (Psalms 17:2). Our Lord appeals to this motive when He proposes "treasure in heaven," the "hundredfold," and "life everlasting." Because of the less perfect nature of the motive this love of God is called "imperfect love" or "interested love" of God. It is already a great deal and should by no means be contemned or slighted, but there is a higher love of God springing from a nobler motive: "perfect love," or as it is sometimes called "disinterested love" of God.

"Perfect love" of God is had when we love Him above all else not so much for the good He so generously bestows on us, but *for Himself*, because He is *all-good in Himself*. This "perfect love" is known as the love of benevolence and

friendship. In its exercise we prescind from our own interests or at least subordinate them to Him, since we love God simply for Himself, and not for our own advantage. This highest of motives makes this the highest type of love of God. In it we take complacent delight in God and in His perfections; we ardently desire to glorify Him; we actively give glory to Him by conforming our will as much as possible in all things to His; we bring others to glorify Him. And all this simply because God is God, because God is all-good and all-lovable in Himself.

The love of benevolence and friendship is perfected *extensively* when we embrace by our love more of the perfections of God and more of His creatures; it is perfected *intensively* when we make the acts of love more vehemently and more constantly until we develop a solid habit of the perfect love of God. When the love reaches the maximum we are capable of then we are simply perfect.

### *Mystic Union with God*

Finally, there is still another union with God for which the union by mind and will activity is an indispensable preparation. It is mystic union, a special gift of God's grace to His favored friends. Mystic union with God, an earthly union which approaches that of the blessed in heaven, is not necessary for spiritual perfection, but it is a potent means to it because it results in sublime and intense acts of the perfect love of God. The precious gift of mystic union generally presupposes in him who receives it an advanced degree of union with God by active love, especially perfect love.

### *Conclusion*

To conclude by way of summary: *spiritual perfection is union with God.* It is union with God by a maximum

of sanctifying grace, called static perfection. It is union with God by a certain amount of necessary supernatural mind activity, theoretical and practical. It is union with God by a maximum of supernatural will activity, a maximum of the perfect love of God, called dynamic perfection.

This earthly union with God which is our perfection merits for us and is the measure of our union with God in heaven, our ultimate, inamissible perfection.

All our union with God, both in heaven and on earth, all our spiritual perfection, we owe to the hypostatic union with God had in Jesus Christ, since He as God-man merited them for us by His life, passion and death. Moreover, He is the peerless Model of all spiritual perfection and union with God.

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### PAMPHLET NOTICES

It seems that religious institutes in increasing numbers are issuing pamphlets and other material to attract aspirants to their ranks. This is as it should be. One such pamphlet comes from South Africa and bears the title, *Priestly and Religious Vocation*. After giving a brief account of the missionary activity of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the author, Father T. F. Kelly, O.M.I., describes the nature and signs of vocation both in relation to the priesthood and to the religious life. He concludes with an earnest plea to the generous young people of South Africa to heed the call of Christ. The pamphlet may be obtained from the Oblate Novitiate, 44 Parkhill Road, Glebe, Germiston, Transvaal, South Africa.

With the same purpose in mind the Sisters of Loretto, Loretto Motherhouse, Nerinx, P.O., Kentucky, have issued a folder entitled "*Congratulations Peggy!*" Written in the form of a letter to a young woman about to enter the novitiate it gives us a brief account of the founding, the history, and the work of the Loretines in the United States and in China. Some good photographs depicting houses and activities of the congregation greatly increase the value of the folder.

Father Albert H. Dolan, O.Carm., the zealous promoter of devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux, has issued a pamphlet, *St. Therese, Patroness of the Missions*. In 16 pages he sets forth the reasons why St. Therese was chosen as Patroness of the Missions and urges her devout clients to follow her example of prayer and unremitting sacrifice for the missions. The pamphlet may be obtained from The Carmelite Press, 6413 Dante Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, or 55 Demarest Avenue, Englewood, N.J. Price: ten cents.

## Our Lady's Parents

Francis L. Filas, S.J.

**M**UCH as we would like to know the actual life-story of the parents of Our Lady, we can find nothing directly concerning them in the Gospels. However, Holy Scripture gives us some information in stating that Christ was promised to Abraham and to Jacob, and that He came out of the tribe of Juda.<sup>1</sup> This means that Jesus was a son of David and a son of Abraham, not only legally through St. Joseph but also naturally through the Blessed Virgin, and therefore through her parents, Joachim and Anne.

Various Scripture scholars have proposed a rather ingenious theory to show that Luke set forth the genealogy of Mary rather than of Joseph when he wrote, "And Jesus Himself, when He began His work, was about thirty years of age, being—as was supposed—the son of Joseph, the son of Heli . . . the son of David . . . the son of Adam, who was the son of God" (3:23). According to this theory the text is phrased differently so as to read, "Jesus . . . being—as was supposed the son of Joseph—the son of Heli," and so forth. Thus the person of Heli is identified with the person of Joachim. Even further, the two names are said to be the same, for "Heli" (Eli) is taken as a shortened form of "Eliachim." Both "Eliachim" and "Joachim" are interchangeable, meaning in Hebrew, "God sets up."

Unfortunately, so charming a theory is far from being accepted by all Scripture scholars. From earliest times the genealogies of Matthew and Luke have usually been inter-

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<sup>1</sup>Genesis 18, 22, 28; Luke 1:32; Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8; Hebrews 8.

puted as giving the legal ancestry of Our Lord through St. Joseph and not through Mary. This has been the general tenor of opinion even though no one theory fits perfectly in further explaining the problems connected with the two varying accounts.

Because of this silence of the Gospels we must turn to the only other possible sources of information concerning Mary's parents: the legends of Joachim and Anne.

### *The Legends of Joachim and Anne*

At first sight it might seem a worthless task to have recourse to a legend to seek data about historic personages. Yet in the case of Joachim and Anne nothing else exists. We must at least consider what was said about them, even if we cannot accept it all as true.

The earliest account in which they are mentioned is called the *Protoevangel of James*, a work pretending to be a history of the birth of Mary and of the early events in the life of Jesus. Having originated about 150 A. D., it is only a hundred years younger than the Gospels and thus enjoys a reputation of antiquity.

In common with other apocryphal literature of its type the *Protoevangel of James* was apparently based on snatches of true tradition—a sort of pious gossip—concerning Christ and those who were near to Him. Something like our modern historical novel, the *Protoevangel* was meant to fill in with plausible details the gaps where the curiosity of the faithful was left unsatisfied by the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But unlike these Gospels the Apocryphal tradition was of purely human origin. It was neither divinely inspired when composed nor providentially kept pure when transmitted. Accordingly, as it was repeated again and again in word and writing, it accumulated more and more exaggerations



and additions, so that at the present day we have no way of determining what is genuine and what is spurious in its content.

The Church never accepted this imitation of the true Gospels, but early branded it as apocryphal (as, for example, in the Decree of Pope Gelasius in 495). The majority of early Fathers of the Church, as well as later ecclesiastical writers, likewise recognized it as counterfeit. None the less, popular authors in the Middle Ages and afterward borrowed extensively from the legendary source in order to stimulate the great devotion of the Ages of Faith. In all this spurious devotional literature the question of lying or passing on a lie was seemingly not attended to; rather, generous hearts uncritically sought and eagerly accepted every means to gain more knowledge of the lives of Jesus and His saints.

Two enlargements were made of the legend of Joachim and Anne as it appeared in the *Protoevangel of James*: namely, the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* (about 450 A. D.) and the *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary* (exact date unknown). As is evident, there is more likelihood of truth in the original, the *Protoevangel*, than in any of its succeeding variations. This is the substance of the original account:

Joachim is a rich and generous shepherd. He and his wife Anne are deeply grieved because they have no children. While Anne is lamenting the curse of her sterility, an angel appears to her with the words, "The Lord hath heard thy prayer, and thou shalt conceive, and shalt bring forth; and thy seed shall be spoken of in all the world." At the same time a similar vision is granted Joachim while tending his flocks. In gratitude to God, Anne promises to consecrate her child to the divine service in the Temple. Upon the birth of the child, who receives the name of



Mary, the happy mother breaks out into a canticle of thanksgiving. Later, when she is three years old, Mary is brought to the Temple and joyfully remains there to praise and serve God.

Such is the gist of the early chapters of the *Protoevangel of James*. In the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* the story is given more imaginative coloring. Joachim's generosity is described at greater length. He distributes his riches to the poor and to those "who worshipped God" before taking a share for himself. At 15 he is already a wealthy shepherd; and at 20 he marries Anne, "the daughter of Achar, of his own tribe, that is, of the tribe of Juda of the family of David." The couple's childlessness lasts for twenty years, after which the angels appear to Anne and Joachim. The rest of this tale merely develops the story of the *Protoevangel*, adding more details, greater emphasis, and particularly more frequent miraculous interventions.

The third and final form of the legend is contained in the *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary*, a charming though unhistorical compilation of the preceding tradition. This Gospel does not add substantially to the tale of the *Protoevangel*, but rather edits it so that the poetical beauty of the narrative is heightened and made more sublime.

#### *What Is True of Joachim and Anne?*

The task of separating the true from the false in the old Apocryphal legends is most difficult, if not impossible. Yet, though we have no historical norms by which to judge, we can at least attempt to determine what is definitely interpolated and what can perhaps be a vestige of the original correct tradition.

In the first place, the special miracles of the angelic apparitions are quite doubtful. Such momentous divine inter-

ventions in the lives of the parents of Mary would certainly have drawn so much attention—should we say notoriety?—to the Blessed Virgin that the obscurity which accompanied her life with Joseph and Jesus would have given way to constant public notice. Moreover, the *Protoevangel of James*, like all the Apocrypha, has a very explicit tendency to scatter miracles with a bountiful hand throughout its narrative. Perhaps the most cogent reason for denying credibility to the miracles of the *Protoevangel* is the evident modeling of these prodigies on genuine miracles related in Holy Scripture. All the writers of Apocryphal legends are eager to have their accounts placed on a par with the canonical Gospels. They not only copy typical Gospel stories, but even plagiarize directly from the inspired text.

In the case of Joachim his forty days' fast as a prayer to obtain a child is based on the fasts of Moses, Elias, and Christ.<sup>2</sup> Even more striking is the parallel between Anne's prayer to God and the prayer of Anna, mother of Samuel, that the Lord "would give to His servant a man-child."<sup>3</sup> Again, the canticle of thanksgiving of Anne, wife of Joachim, is suspiciously similar to the canticle of her earlier namesake and, to some extent, to the *Magnificat* of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to the few important details given by the Gospels, the legends go to great lengths to set forth trivialities. That is why the familiar details concerning Joachim's prosperity must also be rejected. They constitute precisely the information which the Apocrypha were invented to supply.

The least doubtful of all the data in the legend is the correctness of the names Joachim and Anne. It seems

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<sup>2</sup>Exodus 24:18, 34:28; 3 Kings 19:8; Matthew 4:2.

<sup>3</sup>1 Kings 1:9-18.

<sup>4</sup>1 Kings 2; Luke 1:46-55.

likely that the name "Anne" (Anna, Hannah) reminded the early writer of Hannah, mother of Samuel, and thus led him to introduce the direct divine announcement of the forthcoming birth of Mary, modeled on that of the announcement of the birth of Samuel. On the other hand, "Elcana," the name of the father of Samuel has no resemblance to "Joachim," the name of the father of Mary. Neither the names nor the circumstances related of Joachim and Elcana are similar. Finally, we must not forget that in all Christian centuries "Joachim" and "Anne" were accepted as the names of the parents of Mary even while the other details of their legend were discarded by the majority of Church scholars.

While we can prudently doubt the authenticity of the legends of Joachim and Anne, we know with absolute certainty that God gave them every grace needed for their position as father and mother of the Mother of God. The all-perfect and sinless Mary could hardly be born of any but the most saintly parents. In granting Joachim and Anne the title of saints, the Church has acted wisely and consistently. The devotion which it sanctioned does not stand or fall with the correctness or falsity of the legends. Rather, it represents the honor that is logically paid to the two persons whom the Eternal Father chose to bring forth the Mother of God. Just as Jesus sanctified Mary and Joseph by His close relations with them, so must Mary have sanctified her father and mother by her intimacy with them in the years during which God was preparing her for her career as mother of the Savior and as the mother of all redeemed mankind.

The words of St. Peter Damian best express the attitude we ought to cultivate with regard to the details of the lives of Mary's parents. "There are some," he writes, "who wishing to know what is useless, seek with vain and exces-

sive curiosity, to find who was the father and who the mother of Mary. They seek to discover in vain what the Evangelist deemed it superfluous to relate. Had this knowledge been necessary, so noble a historian would not have neglected to give it to us, inasmuch as it is the constant practice of the sacred writers never to say what can injure and never to omit what it is useful for us to know."<sup>5</sup>

If the greatness of the Blessed Virgin stemmed from Joachim and Anne, the Gospels would have described them fully to us. But the case is actually the opposite. Mary is the light in whose reflected glory her parents shine. That is sufficient for our interest. With absolute assurance we know the greatness of Mary from the revealed word of God. This fact again is more than enough to deduce the greatness of her parents. Our piety and devotion do not rest on an old tradition which cannot be authenticated and might one day be proved false in its entirety. They are based on the truth demonstrated again and again during nineteen centuries of Christian history—nearer to Mary means nearer to God.

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<sup>5</sup>*Hom. 3 in Nativ. B.V.M.*

## Questions and Answers

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Many sacristans would be grateful to you if you would publish these questions and the answers to them in *Review for Religious*: (1) Must blessed ashes left over from Ash Wednesday be put into the sacarium? (2) Please list all things that should be put into the sacarium.

1) Yes, it is proper to put the blessed ashes into the sacarium, or else to throw them into the fire. (2) We cannot guarantee to give a list of *all* the things that should be put into the sacarium. Here are some of them: used baptismal water, other blessed water, the contents of the ablution cup kept near the tabernacle, the water used in washing the altar linens (palls, purificators, and corporals), and the water left in the *lavabo* dish after Mass.

—36—

Please outline the respective jurisdiction of the mother general and the local superior in a motherhouse in which there is also a novitiate. What authority should each exercise with regard to (1) Sisters residing habitually in the house, (2) Sisters visiting the motherhouse, (3) occasional events.

The mother general governs the institute as a whole; the local superior governs the local community just as any other local superior does. Hence the Sisters residing habitually in the house, as well as Sisters visiting the motherhouse, are subject to the local superior as they would be in any other community. As to occasional events, these have reference either to the local community or to the institute as a whole. In the first case they are under the direction of the local superior, in the second case under that of the mother general.

The novitiate is directly under the care and supervision of the mistress of novices. Canon 561, § 1 clearly indicates this: "The master (mistress) of novices alone has the right and the obligation of providing for the formation of the novices; he alone is charged with the direction of the novitiate, so that no one, under whatever pretext, may interfere in these matters, except superiors who are permitted to do so by the constitutions and the canonical visitors; as to the general discipline of the house, the master (mistress), together with the novices themselves, is subject to the (local) superior."

—37—

In two of our convents there has been a long-standing custom of taking the body of a deceased Sister to the community chapel on the afternoon before the day of the funeral. I recall either hearing or reading that only the body of a deceased bishop, priest, etc., may be left in the church or chapel before the burial Mass. What is the attitude of the Church on this point? Has canon law any provisions regarding this matter?

There seems to be no positive legislation either prohibiting or permitting the body of a deceased person to be brought to the church or chapel the day before the funeral and to remain there overnight. Hence it would seem to be determined by local custom. In places where such a custom has been observed for a long time it may be continued, but it should not be introduced in other places without first consulting the local ordinary.

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Some years ago we opened a mission house in a diocese distinct from that in which our motherhouse is located. We obtained permission from both bishops to do so. We now wish to close this house because of serious difficulties. Is it necessary to inform both bishops of our intention to discontinue our services in that particular parish?

The closing of a religious house is provided for in canon 498 which reads as follows: "No religious house, whether formal or not, belonging to an exempt institute, can be suppressed without apostolic authority; a house belonging to a non-exempt congregation approved or commended by the Holy See can be suppressed by the superior general with the consent of the local ordinary; if it belongs to a diocesan congregation, it can be suppressed by the mere authority of the local ordinary after consultation with the superior of the congregation, subject however to the prescription of canon 493 if there be question of an only house, and preserving the right of recourse with suspensive effect to the Apostolic See."

Hence we must distinguish three cases: (1) The house belongs to an exempt institute, that is, to an order (which is exempt by law) or to a congregation which enjoys a special privilege of exemption. In this case the permission of the Holy See must be obtained in order to close the house. (2) The house belongs to a congregation approved or commended (*decree of praise*) by the Holy See. In this case the superior general can close the house with the *consent* of the local ordinary, that is, the bishop of the diocese in which the house to

be closed is located. If the bishop does not give his consent, the house cannot be closed by the superior general. But the permission of the bishop of the diocese in which the motherhouse is located is not required to close a house in another diocese. (3) The house belongs to a diocesan congregation. The local ordinary alone can close it after consultation with the superior general of the congregation. The superior general cannot close the house; only the bishop can do so. He must consult the superior general, but he does not need the consent of the latter. However, if the superior general thinks the house should not be closed, he may appeal to the Holy See against the decree of the bishop. Until the Holy See decides the case the decree remains suspended.

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On page 306 of the September, 1944, issue of the *Review*, you have an article on rosaries made of string. We are eager to learn if anyone may use these rosaries and gain the indulgences, or is their use restricted to those who are in the armed forces? May the rosary indulgences be gained by using the rosary plaques which have a kind of notched bead effect forming a decade around the plaque? These have been advertised in some Catholic reviews.

From the fact that this extraordinary privilege of blessing rosaries made of string was granted only to chaplains of the British and Allied Forces for the duration of the war, provided they already enjoyed the privilege of blessing and indulgencing rosaries, it would seem to follow that the use of such rosaries is confined to members of the armed forces. It is very doubtful whether others may use them and gain the indulgences attached.

In order that it may be blessed and enriched with indulgences, a rosary must be made in the form prescribed by the Church, that is, it must consist of five, ten, or fifteen decades. The Sacred Congregation of Indulgences explicitly declared on January 20, 1836, that gold or silver rings upon which ten beads had been embossed could not be blessed with the indulgences of the rosary. Such devices as rings and plaques may be a help for counting *Paters and Aves*, but one would not gain the indulgences attached to the recitation of the beads by using them.

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Is a religious institute justified in refusing perpetual vows to a religious who from the first year of her temporary profession began to manifest



symptoms of a psychosis (dementia praecox type)? The doctor sincerely believes that the cause and perhaps some minor symptoms may have been present before her first profession (unknown to the religious herself). The doctor also recommends that the individual return to the world because she will have a better chance of making a normal adjustment outside the environs of the cloister.

The answer to this case is contained in canon 637: "Those who have made profession of temporary vows may, when the term of the vows has expired, freely leave the institute; likewise, the institute, for just and reasonable motives, can exclude the religious from renewing the temporary vows or from making profession of perpetual vows, not however because of ill health unless it be clearly proved that the religious, before profession, had fraudulently hidden or dissimulated the illness."

The institute, therefore, may not refuse perpetual vows to the religious in question if she did not fraudulently conceal her illness. The religious, however, is free to leave at the expiration of her temporary vows, and a dispensation would readily be granted by the proper authority before the temporary vows have expired. It would be advisable, therefore, to have the doctor inform the Sister frankly of her condition and of the prospect of recovery outside the cloister, and to have him suggest to her that she should ask for a dispensation from her temporary vows, or at least leave of her own accord at the expiration of her temporary vows. If the Sister insists on staying, however, the institute may not send her away but must allow her to take perpetual vows if she is mentally capable of doing so.

With reference to those who may be incapable of pronouncing final vows, it may be useful to introduce here two answers regarding the treatment and status of a religious who loses his mind during the period of temporary vows. The answers were given by the Sacred Congregation of Religious on February 5, 1925, with the approval of His Holiness, Pius XI.

"Whether one who is professed of the simple vows in an order or congregation, and who during the three years loses his mind, even incurably according to the judgment of physicians, can at the end of three years be sent back to his relatives or into the world, or whether he must be kept in the religious institute?"

The answer given: "In the negative to the first part; in the affirmative to the second."

To the further question: "What is the juridical condition of such



a religious, and what are the obligations of the religious institute in the matter?" the reply was: "The religious in question belongs to the religious institute in the state in which he was when he lost his mind, and the institute has the same obligations towards him that it had at that time."

—41—

A certain mother superior of a congregation in which temporary vows are taken for a year at a time for three years preparatory to perpetual profession availed herself of the permission granted by canon 577, § 2 to anticipate the renewal of temporary vows by one month. Thus, suppose the Sisters who made their first temporary profession on August 15, 1942, were permitted to renew their vows for a year on July 15, 1943, and again on June 15, 1944, and finally were allowed to take their perpetual vows on June 15, 1945. Would such perpetual vows be valid?

No, the perpetual vows would not be valid because canon 572 requires that a period of three years with temporary vows precede the profession of perpetual vows in order that it may be valid. The Sisters in question had temporary vows for only two years and ten months. Hence their perpetual vows were invalid.

The mother superior misunderstood the permission granted in canon 577. This allows the *renewal* of temporary vows to be anticipated by some days but not beyond one month. It does not take away any of the time required for temporary vows. When the Sisters took their first vows for a year, that year expired on the same recurring day one year later, August 15, 1943. Hence the vows which were renewed for another year on July 15, 1943 did not begin to bind until August 15, 1943, and did not expire until August 15, 1944. That this is the only meaning which canon 577 can have becomes evident if we read canon 34, § 3, 5° which tells us how time is to be computed in this case: "When there is question of acts to be renewed at stated times, for instance, a period of three years after temporary profession up to perpetual profession, the time ends on the same recurring day on which it began, but the new act may be placed at any time on that day." Hence perpetual profession may not be made until the same calendar day three years after the first temporary profession was made. As we have seen above, this complete period of three years is required by canon 572 for the *validity* of the perpetual profession.

What is the obligation of the local superior with regard to conferences to be given to the community from time to time? How often should they be given? Must they be given by a priest? What is to be done if no priest is available?

Canon 509 prescribes that "the local superiors shall take care . . . to have given at least twice a month . . . especially in lay institutes, a pious exhortation to all the members of the house." This exhortation is something different from the catechetical instruction prescribed by the same canon for lay Brothers and lay Sisters (that separate class of religious devoted to domestic duties). The purpose of the exhortation is not principally to instruct but to renew the religious spirit and to urge the members of the community to even greater efforts in the observance of religious discipline and in the acquirement of religious virtues.

These exhortations should be given to the community twice a month. Several eminent authors are of the opinion that they need not be given during the summer vacation.

The law says that Superiors *shall take care*. This is a milder form of precept than the ordinary *must see to it*. It requires serious diligence on the part of the superior to have these exhortations given to the community twice a month. If after diligent care has been exerted the exhortation cannot be had, the law is not violated.

The exhortation may be given by the superior himself or by some other religious of the community provided he is capable. In lay congregations an effort should be made to have a priest give these exhortations, at least from time to time. In case a priest or a capable religious cannot be had to give these exhortations, it is *recommended* that a conference be read in place of the exhortation. Within recent years excellent conferences written especially for religious have been published by Fathers Skelly, Muntsch, Gabriels, and others. They will serve as a substitute for the exhortation as far as subject matter is concerned. This substitute, however, cannot be *strictly imposed*, since a pious reading is not the juridical substitute for an exhortation. However, in practice, when nothing better can be had, such pious reading of a conference dealing with a subject relating directly to the religious life will help to attain the purpose of the law, namely, to stir up the religious spirit and to renew religious observance.

# Communications

## Against "Formalism"

Reverend Fathers:

In your last issue a Priest Religious objected to a point a Sister brought up in the question, "Is there not too much formalism in our life?" The Sister had a point that should make all superiors examine their own governing of their communities. Is adherence to any community rule more important than charity to the laity?

But that is only by the way. I'd like to answer in my own humble way some of the arguments he proposes in answer to her question. He begins by saying that we religious are professional people and can't be expected to be on call twenty-four hours a day. Well, if we are professional people, what is our profession? Unless the religious is in a contemplative order, isn't it the saving of souls by *personal* dealings with them? Helping souls to heaven by teaching, preaching, administering the sacraments, leading souls closer to Christ by our own example, especially charity—not only in spiritual matters but in mundane matters as well? We should thank God that the people trust us enough to come to us with their every day troubles, and if these things make ours a twenty-four-hour-a-day job, then that's what it should be. It will be a sorry day for us if they ever do lose this trust in us, and we are not helping matters by refusing to even see them. It would be pretty difficult to imagine Christ or the Blessed Virgin setting up office hours for those who wanted to talk to them. The story of Christ and the little children gives us some idea of what He would do.

The Priest Religious then goes on to say that religious orders would be wrecked over night if their members were at the mercy of every whim and caprice of undisciplined souls that want us to be servants of the people whenever their impulse suggests. From what I understand of religious life, we're supposed to be servants of the people even when their impulse doesn't suggest it. And as to the first part, if any order can be wrecked because people want advice, comfort, or even a "hand-out," from the individual members of the order, it would probably be for the good of the Church if it were wrecked.

I know of no such order; but if any exists, its foundations are certainly very shallow—its members are not at all Christ-like, and they don't give the correct picture of the "Love thy neighbor" policy that Christ preached and that they should practice.

The Priest Religious then goes on to say, "any priest or religious who is at the continual call of unreasonable people . . . endangers his health." That sounds as if the average priest or religious has a line of unreasonable people waiting to see him or her all day long. I've worked in a large city parish and no one of the five priests there, no matter how popular, ever had more than four different parties waiting for him. It might take him a couple of hours to see them all, but isn't that our job? Not only God, but even the laity expect us to do more than say Mass, hear confessions, run sick calls, teach in the school, and conduct a couple of sodalities. Then too the average caller at a rectory or convent is not unreasonable. Certainly, there are some, and we can't expect to be immune. But only one out of ten could be called truly unreasonable. The rest of the time isn't the priest or Sister the unreasonable one when he or she objects that the parlor call is taking them from something else?

His letter then goes on to say, "One means of taking care of this situation is to have an intelligent doorkeeper who can judge when there is a real need." Heaven help us! Why not tell the housekeeper to call us only for sick calls. People usually come to see a priest, not a housekeeper. I've only been ordained nine years, but even I can see the spirit of anti-clericalism that is growing even among our own people. Much of this is our own fault. Too often we see or hear of a priest or religious who is so high-handed that he makes himself inaccessible to the people. That isn't exactly what Christ had in mind when He called us to be "fishers of men."

No, I'm afraid I can't agree with this Priest Religious. If we have people storming the doors of our rectories because they want to see the priest, good for us!! True, our health may be endangered by this overwork, but what greater way to become ill than by serving the people, reasonable or unreasonable, as Christ would want us to?

In conclusion, to the Sister who asked, "Is there not too much formalism in our life?" I'd like to say, "There certainly is, Sister, and not nearly enough charity."

A Diocesan Priest

### Delayed Vocations

Reverend Fathers:

I remember a few years ago a Catholic weekly began to run a page for the men in the service. Soon the women in the service complained that nothing was done for them. Perhaps they will make the same complaint when they realize that something big is being done for the men to keep alive the grace of a vocation to the religious and (or) priestly life, or to enkindle such a vocation.

No doubt there are women in the service whom Christ will favor with the call to serve Him as Sisters; women whom He will want to continue their marvellous work of caring for the needy and the sick and of educating children, but not without consecrating their lives to Him in religion as His Spouses. These women will have had training in rather rigid discipline; they will have learned that it is possible to live contentedly in a uniform that is not made of silks and satins; they will know what it means to make sacrifices for others.

It would certainly be of great help for them to follow the inspirations of grace if they would receive positive encouragement from the Sisterhoods, if they knew they are really wanted. Sisterhoods that are interested in such vocations should let the women know that they are willing to accept them.

My attention was called to the Little Flower Mission Circle, Inc. (321 E. 156th St., New York 55, N. Y.) for the promotion of vocations to all religious communities. It publishes a quarterly called *Come Follow Me*. Perhaps this could serve the purpose. Or, a bulletin similar to *Introibo* could be printed. Centers might be designated where such candidates could meet, either in a school or in the parish hall, or perhaps even in the convent parlor. There they could come in direct contact with the Sisters. It seems that such a venture would be most pleasing to Christ and quite profitable to religious communities and to the Church.

Religious Priest

[EDITORS' NOTE: Upon receipt of the preceding communication we wrote to the Editor of *Introibo* and asked him to tell us something about this publication. We received the following answer—with permission to publish it if we wished.]

Reverend Fathers:

*Introibo* is a mimeographed bulletin that has had three issues since

January and will have five more each year. It is sent to any serviceman who writes to *Introibo*, 19 Eye St., N.W., Washington 1, D.C. It is meant for servicemen who plan to be diocesan priests, religious priests, or Brothers. It makes no difference what diocese the men will belong to or what religious institute they intend to join. The bulletin is for all. We prefer to send the bulletin to the men at their own request and we will not keep a man on our mailing list unless he shows interest enough to write us at least a postcard. No obligation is incurred by the readers except to pray for one another.

Timothy Reardon, S.J.,

Editor of *Introibo*.

### **We Are Worldly!**

Reverend Fathers:

The suggestion for discussion, "Are we really getting worldly?" printed in the last issue of the REVIEW would seem a very worth-while topic. That we are becoming worldly is, I believe, beyond doubt. Perhaps not every one will agree to this foregone conclusion. However, presupposing agreement, the next question is "Why?"

Here are a few answers: (1) Lack of observance of poverty as enjoined by the constitutions and the rules of the various orders of religious. (2) Movies, newspapers, social visits, travel. (3) Deplorably poor retreats. (4) Few if any monthly conferences and these lacking in continuity and practical application to the daily life of a religious. (5) Confessors whose sole duty it is to administer the sacrament—who give little or no spiritual direction.

Among the arguments that are frequently brought against these points and which, in the mind of the writer, have little or no weight are the following: (1) The age in which we are living makes demands that were unknown to the Founders who drew up our constitutions and rules. Therefore the need for adjustment in our way of life. (2) The need of educators to be informed on current affairs makes it imperative that first-hand information be gathered from the daily newspapers, the screen, and contacts through visits, travel, and so forth.

Yours for more Unworldly Religious,  
A Sister

## Miscellaneous Topics

Besides the foregoing communications we have a number of brief letters on a variety of topics. We cannot print all of these just as they were written: hence we wish to survey them here in order to bring the communications up to date. Several Sisters have written to express agreement with the mother superior who spoke of the self-deceit among religious (cf. Vol. IV, p. 131). Among these correspondents some agree with the other mother superior who attributed the self-deceit in the community to the superior herself (cf. Vol. IV, p. 202).

Another Sister takes us back to our communications on retreats—in fact this letter may have been received a long time ago. The Sister writes:

"One retreat that impressed me contained several Emily Post talks about Sisters and their behavior and looks on the street, in stations, buses, and with lay people. Father stressed the idea that because we are special friends of God and represent His Church, we are constantly watched by critical people and should act quietly and without too much haste. We often forget."

And still another Sister takes up the subject of a certain type of "nationalism" and its effect on religious vocations. By "nationalism" she is apparently referring, not to racial or national prejudice, but to a custom existing in some communities of carrying on recreation and official business in a foreign language. The Sister thinks that this is a great trial on American-born girls, and that for this reason the girls are either kept from entering the community or are unable to persevere after entering. A priest who is much interested in the vocation problem also suggests that communities that have this custom of speaking a foreign language might well consider a change or at least some modification of the custom. It is his impression, he says, that a generation or two ago the custom may have been an aid to vocations in many instances, but today it is rather an obstacle to vocations. Both Sister and priest wish it understood that they are offering their suggestions in a constructive spirit and without desire to give offense.

## Book Reviews

**A DYNAMIC WORLD ORDER.** By the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Donald A. Mac Lean, A.M., S.T.L., Ph. D. Pp. xii + 235. The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1945. \$2.50.

This is a thorough discussion of principles and programs which must guide the work of reconstruction and pacification at the end of the war. After sketching the nature and dimensions of the problem, as well as the preparatory measures which have already been taken, the author enters into the discussion of the basic principles and ideals which will serve as a safe foundation. These are essentially moral and spiritual; the neglect of these has brought on the great catastrophe. Such truths are—as papal teachings have constantly emphasized—the dignity of the human person, the unity and solidarity of the human race, the need of social justice and social charity in international relations, recognition of the natural law, the sacredness of the family and the requisite economic security, and the right of private property together with the social responsibility attached to such possession. These and other more particular principles are thoroughly illustrated by means of quotations from papal documents, the pronouncements of responsible leaders, and the declarations of statesmen.

On the basis of these premises the author proceeds to discuss such vital and explosive subjects as global economic interdependence and the consequent right of access to raw materials by all countries, sane nationalism and internationalism, freedom of the seas and of air-transit, international trade and tariffs, population migration and restrictions placed on it, the rights of minorities, disarmament and sanctions against violators of the peace, the need and structure of a world organization together with its responsibilities and its correlation with the rights of the single nations. These topics the author discusses soberly without losing himself in details but always bringing them back to the underlying moral principles. The book is, in the words of Cardinal Villeneuve, who writes a preface, "truly practical and basically sound." It is therefore to be recommended to all who are seriously occupied with present world problems. Will Lissner has well said in his Foreword: "In the last analysis an enduring and dynamic peace will be made . . . by the people from whom (statesmen) derive mediate authority and to whose concerted opinion they must defer."



In the appendices to the book a number of most authoritative statements on the World Order and its underlying principles are brought together: papal pronouncements, statements of religious leaders of the United States and England, the Atlantic Charter, and so forth.

There are two points which we would desire to have more elaborated. The author speaks clearly and pointedly on the matter of tariffs and immigration restrictions, their relations to justice and to the making of a permanent peace. But, in view of the grave decisions which this country is now facing in these matters and the prevalent hazy thinking which manifests itself, it would seem to be very opportune to set forth the whole question in all its bearings. Few seem to realize how much our policy in these matters helped to increase the economic and social unrest before the present war and how fatal persistence in it might prove in the future.

The second topic is of a different character and belongs to the periphery. Msgr. Mac Lean has placed his discussion squarely on a Christian basis and has reinforced it solidly with expressions of papal teachings. The Catholic Church thus enters strongly into the picture but there is no statement of its juridical relations with individual states and with the proposed world organization. On this matter many educated Catholics are not clear, and those outside the fold are suspicious, if not hostile. Some explanation of this subject would help to avoid misunderstandings.—A. C. WAND, S.J.

**THAT YOU MAY LIVE.** By L. F. Cervantes, S.J. Pp. iii + 176. Catechetical Guild, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1945. \$2.00.

*That You May Live* is an explanation and application of the Mystical Body of Christ as the answer to the social problems of our chaotic world.

The book opens with a challenge and an idea—an idea which is as electric and revolutionary today as it was 2,000 years ago; a global idea by means of which St. Paul brought international order to a world torn by the same basic problems as our world today. Perhaps the most ambitious and penetrating chapter of the book is "Paul to the Modern." J. P. Morgan, Margaret Sanger, Stalin, and Churchill present their documented cases. Paul's answer of the Mystical Body is brought into focus and shown to be the only answer all have been looking for.

This book has been designedly written in the idiom of the millions

who, the author believes, will shape the destiny of tomorrow. Readers of the book will do well to keep this fact in mind; otherwise they might find the idiom somewhat startling. Study clubs and social groups will find this work basic and inspirational.

—JOHN J. WALSH, S.J.

**TOO SMALL A WORLD:** *The Life of Francesca Cabrini.* By Theodore Maynard. Pp. xiii + 335. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1945. \$2.50.

The global war has left in its wake such a welter of devastation, want, and suffering that any attempt to bind up the world's wounds has the appearance of a hopeless undertaking. Where is one to start, and how can the efforts of any mere individual, persistent and efficient though they be, contribute appreciably to the rescue of humanity?

To those of us who so much as tolerate such discouraging thoughts, the life of Mother Cabrini comes both as a rebuke and a challenge. Neither the size of the world nor the complexity of its problems frightened her for a moment, and as for wondering where to apply her individual efforts, the task nearest to hand claimed her immediate and undivided attention. That her life was a success from God's point of view is patent from the fact that she was beatified on December 22, 1938, just twenty-one years after the day of her death, and from the additional note that she is to be canonized in the very near future. A less important yet in a way more remarkable consideration is the fact that this saintly woman's life was judged a success by those who ordinarily are guided by worldly standards. Though all her efforts were motivated by zeal for God's kingdom, her achievements in social service were publicly recognized by civic officials, by secular educators, and by representatives of even anti-clerical governments.

Theodore Maynard gives us a smoothly-written, fast-moving account of this remarkable woman as her influence is swiftly extended in Italy, the United States, Central and South America, Spain, and France. The book deserves the widest possible circulation; in a way certain to hold the interest of all classes of readers, it presents a patron *of and for* our times.—C. DEMUTH, S.J.

**THE HOPE OF THE HARVEST:** *The Life of Mother Veronica of the Crucifix, Second Superior General of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, 1820-1903.* By a Sister of the Holy Names. Pp. xv + 431.

**The Society of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Marylhurst, Oregon, 1944. \$4.00 plus postage; 25 per cent discount for religious.**

This altogether charming book successfully combines the inspiring story of Mother Veronica's active and apostolic life with a rather thorough and accurate history of the community which she guided through some of its most crucial years.

Mother Mary Rose (Eulalie Durocher), foundress of the community, lived to direct its destinies for only six years. Her place as superior general was filled by Mother Mary Veronica of the Crucifix (Hedwidge Onésime Davignon), who had joined the community a brief five months after its foundation. She had pronounced her final vows with the foundresses and by reason of her positions as secretary of the council and assistant general had been closely in touch, not only with the affairs of the community, but with Mother Mary Rose herself. Sisters of the Holy Names today rejoice especially in the fact that their second mother general had imbibed the gentle, loving spirit of the foundress so thoroughly that her administration was not only marked by her personal vigor and ability, but was characterized by what could truly be called a perfect extension of the spirit which had inspired Mother Mary Rose to lay the foundations of the community.

Sisters of the Oregon Province of the community are very properly proud of Mother Mary Veronica and grateful to her, for she spent nine years in the Northwest personally directing the affairs of the Sisters, opening schools, herself teaching, catechizing, and, above all, forming the minds and hearts of these pioneer Sisters in the true, original spirit of the community.

The first band of missionaries to leave the motherhouse in Longueuil, Province of Quebec, came to the Northwest Territory in 1859 at the invitation of Archbishop Norbert Blanchet and opened a school in Portland, Oregon. That same St. Mary's Academy, conducted by the daughters of Mother Mary Rose, is still the largest girls' school in the City of Roses. The story of Catholic education in the Northwest is closely bound up with the story of the efforts of these Sisters and of Mother Mary Veronica, who arrived in Portland in 1864.

The last section of *Hope of the Harvest* is well named "Garnered Sheaves," but the author modestly refrains from mentioning that her community is now represented in the United States by three provinces, whose members work in fourteen dioceses. Readers will no

doubt remember the famous "Oregon School Bill," a state legislation which closed all Catholic schools. Its settlement in 1925, "determined once and for all time the inalienable rights of parents to direct the education of their children. It justified by law and irrevocably the continuance of Christian education in every state of the Union." Everyone on the Pacific Coast knows that it was the courage and initiative of the Sisters which instituted and brought to the Supreme Court of the United States the case now known to lawyers as the "Case of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary against the Governor of the State of Oregon." One must read *The Hope of the Harvest* to catch the subtle, sublime spirit of the simple, courageous Mother Mary Veronica of the Crucifix whose undaunted zeal for Catholic education was at the beginning of this story.

The book will be loved and enjoyed especially by the thousands of people in the Pacific Northwest who owe their education to the Sisters of the Holy Names.—C. A. CHAPMAN, S.J.

**THE NURSE: HANDMAID OF THE DIVINE PHYSICIAN.** By Sister Mary Berenice (Beck), O.S.F., R.N., Ph.D. Pp. xvii + 359. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1945. \$2.00.

In the subtitle this is called a "Handbook of the Religious Care of the Patient." It could very appropriately be called a pocket encyclopaedia on the same subject. The author has omitted very few, if any, of the practical religious problems the nurse might encounter in the line of duty. The first part of the book treats of general ethical principles that are especially pertinent to the field of medicine, and of the general Christian obligations of the Catholic nurse with regard to the spiritual care of her patients. The second part deals with the care of Catholic patients; the third, with non-Catholic patients. The fourth and last part is a supplement containing, besides a number of miscellaneous points, a reading list for nurses and a fairly comprehensive dictionary of Catholic terms. Throughout the book there are stories that illustrate in a concrete manner the principles and suggestions given in the text. There is also an index.

The second part of the book (concerning the care of Catholic patients) is especially complete and satisfactory. The canonical and moral requisites pertaining to all the sacraments that the sick might receive, the sacramentals, indulgences, and the care of the deceased—all these points are treated concisely and adequately in this section. This part is further enriched by the text of the ceremonies followed

in administering the sacraments, and by a number of prayers and beautiful ritual blessings.

In general the points of theology and canon law included in the book are well expressed. However, there are several inaccuracies. The author speaks of faith as a requisite for *valid* baptism (p. 247; cf. also p. 53), whereas faith pertains rather to the *fruitful* reception of the sacrament. Also, the text states that baptism by sprinkling is permissible (p. 46), whereas canon 758 disapproves of this method. Finally, treating of the privilege that canon 858, § 2 accords the sick, the author makes a distinction between those sick who are in a place where Mass is said and those who are not in such a place (p. 88). The canon does not make this distinction; it allows all the sick who have been confined for a month and who have no certain hope of an immediate recovery to receive Communion once or twice a week without fasting. And this same canon, by the way, allows food in liquid form and medicine even in *solid* form. The text mentions only liquids as permissible. These are the main inaccuracies; the others are of minor importance. And taken all together they are but a slight blemish on a work that is undoubtedly excellent.

While I am on the subject of blemishes I might mention that, in the section on caring for non-Catholics, the treatment of the virtues of faith, hope, charity, and contrition is hardly satisfactory. And it is regrettable that in this same section nothing is said about the Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics.

The publishers would like a critical appraisal of the book as a text. I do not feel competent to give such an appraisal because I think that the test of a text is in the teaching. But I heartily recommend the book to superintendents of nurses for examination and trial. Final judgment of its utility must rest with them and with the nurses themselves. And perhaps this is as it should be, for it is definitely a woman's book—written for women, by a woman, and with a woman's touch. Though arranged with the trained nurse's eye for practical details, it is not drably practical; it has the light touches, too—even poetry!—G. Kelly, S.J.

**ENJOYING THE NEW TESTAMENT.** By Margaret T. Monro. Pp. xviii + 204. Longmans, Green and Co., London, New York, Toronto, 1945. \$2.50.

The purpose of this book is clearly stated by the author: "It is meant as a springboard for a dive into the living waters of God's

Word." It is an introduction and a plan for a reading course in the New Testament, to last some five or six months. The idea is to aid people to read the New Testament as a whole, in such a way that they will find the reading an enjoyable and a spiritually profitable experience.

The readers whom Miss Monro has in mind are Catholic layfolk of average education, not scholars. She herself, however, has carefully pondered the critical studies of English and French Biblical scholars, and has succeeded admirably in making the results of their researches intelligible to those whose vocation is not erudition, but modern Catholic living in the workaday world. The language she uses is non-technical and colloquial.

She rightly recognizes that the best way to read the books of the New Testament is to take them, as far as possible, in the order in which they were written, rather than open St. Matthew and plod on doggedly to the "Amen" of the Apocalypse. Thus the background will be historical, and the reader will go through the thrilling adventure of reliving in imagination the career of the early Church.

The reading as outlined is not tiresomely rigid in arrangement; allowance is made for enough elasticity to suit varying temperaments. Some minds are undoubtedly repelled by an excessively systematic treatment of the great truths of revelation; a certain discursiveness in the matter presented for their reflections is a genuine advantage for them.

Anyone who faithfully follows the course will discover at the end that life has taken on a new or at least a deeper meaning. For the inspired writings free us from the imprisoning horizons of petty thoughts and trivial experiences. They show us that we are vitally important actors in the cosmic drama of the war between God and Satan, and impress on us how tremendously it matters which side we choose.

To get Catholics to read the Gospels and Epistles in the manner suggested by this book would be a considerable achievement. Perhaps the author would have done better to omit exhortations to have pencil and paper at hand for jottings, chronological reconstructions, and delineations of the personalities of Biblical characters. Such proddings have a tendency to deter people who would be glad if they were left undisturbed to read and meditate in peace.

—CYRIL VOLLERT, S.J.

## Extreme Unction, Key to Heaven

Clarence McAuliffe, S.J.

**T**HE first time we assisted at the funeral of a fellow-religious, we probably learned an impressive and abiding lesson. Still tintured as we were with that worldly spirit which encompasses death with an impenetrable fog of tears and gloom, we were perhaps mildly shocked to sense an unusually cheerful atmosphere in the community after the funeral. This set us thinking and we soon recovered from our shock. We reflected that no other reaction could be expected of religious. If death, as faith teaches us, is the door to everlasting life, then the demise of a consecrated child of God must be a joyful event despite the natural pangs of separation. We might have wept; we might have experienced a feeling of emptiness; but despite these lawful and normal symptoms of grief, we realized that the occasion called much more for rejoicing. "Blessed are they who die in the Lord." The gaiety consequent upon the funeral and evidently inspired by it taught us, as no instruction or sermon could, that immortality and heaven are facts. It made us realize more keenly that this life is merely a porch, not a home. It injected new blood into our spirit of detachment.

But our fellow-religious had passed through a supreme crisis before death and our joy hinged upon the conviction that he had met that crisis well. Death for every man is the climax in a series of crises that make life a battlefield. We may fail in other crises and yet succeed in life; but if we fail in the crisis of death, we become eternal castaways. To



guarantee our success at this crucial moment, our blessed Savior instituted the sacrament of extreme unction.

Sometimes we might feel inclined to ask: "Why did the Savior not restore the gift of immunity from death which God granted to the entire human family before Adam's sin?" We might answer partly that He has done almost as much by giving us the sacrament of extreme unction. Cold weather is not particularly burdensome to healthy people who live in well-heated homes and dress comfortably when they go out. But it is hard on the poor because they are bereft of fuel and sufficient clothing. In the same way, death would be a formidable spectre if we were left to our natural resources. But God has removed its sting by the spiritual anodyne of extreme unction.

Probably not one Catholic in ten could explain fully the real reason why God established this sacred rite. Some would say God wants to help sick people prepare for death. Others would say that He wants to comfort them. Others believe that He intends to improve the health of the infirm. Others again, think that He aims at removing temporal punishment from the soul. All these answers contain some truth, but none of them gives the whole truth. As a matter of fact, God's real purpose is to purge the soul so thoroughly of all traces of sin and its effects that the dying man will by-pass purgatory. If he prepares sufficiently for extreme unction and cooperates generously with its graces, he will never experience the frustrated love and sensible pains of God's temporary prison but will be welcomed at once by the smile of Christ into God's mansion for the just.

Astonishing? Yes, but true none the less and a belief held by all theologians without exception. Of course, to obtain this *immediate* admittance into heaven, certain conditions must be fulfilled. Among these, two are fundamental. The sick person must ordinarily be in the state of



grace when he receives the sacrament, since it is primarily a sacrament of the living. Secondly, he must receive the sacrament while he still has the use of his faculties. If he delays it until his physical and mental forces are nearly depleted, he may not be sufficiently disposed to gain the full effect of the sacrament and he will not be able to use adequately the graces spontaneously springing from it.

To prepare him for God's embrace instantaneously after death, certain results must be produced in the soul of the sick person. To begin with, his sickness itself is the cause of spiritual trouble and may endanger his eternal salvation. To meet this danger, the sacrament provides the infirm man with actual graces that impart courage and buoyancy to him. These actual graces do not all come when the sacrament is received, but from that time until the moment of death they *keep coming* whenever they are needed. If the sick person is to recover from his malady, they keep coming until he is out of serious danger. Nor is their coming due to the prayers or good works of the patient but principally to the divine efficacy of the sacrament itself.

It is part of our faith that extreme unction confers this spiritual strength and confidence to the sick. In fact, it is a quite commonly accepted opinion today that this is the distinctive effect of this sacrament. That we need God's special support when we fall seriously ill is beyond question. When the body is weak, its passions become unruly. Satan is apt to be very active as death impends. This does not mean that we believe that most religious will be assailed at this time by temptations of every kind. Many sick religious apparently are bothered very little by assaults against purity or faith or resignation to God's will. But fear, diffidence, anxiety, and depression are the common lot of those whose lives are ebbing away. In normal health we

do not realize how harrowing such temptations may become because we do not realize how fond we are of this present world until we are on the verge of leaving it. We may meditate on death again and again, but our imaginations are not keen enough to stir up the strains of feeling that will strike their discordant notes when we are about to say farewell to this world forever.

"I am dangerously ill. The doctor says I shall die or am likely to die." Once we speak thus with ourselves, a turmoil naturally arises in our souls. Willy-nilly our memories go searching back through our entire past beginning from the dawn of reason. Black splashes of sin mar the beauty of the picture we have painted. These sins have been forgiven, of course, by the sacrament of penance. But now is the time when Satan strives to upset our tranquillity. "Didn't you fail to confess such and such a sin?" "You weren't sorry when you confessed that sin or you wouldn't have committed it again." "Look at those temptations you dallied with." "Look how remiss you were in your religious life." Such temptations to distrust—for they are purely temptations—are apt to assail the holiest religious; and against them the sacrament of extreme unction sends forth its invigorating injections of confidence, courage, and childlike trust in God.

But not all disquietude arises from the past. The present, too, has its special difficulties. We may be worried by the distracted condition of our mind. We cannot focus our attention on God or on anything else. We try to pray and we cannot. God flits in and out of our minds. This inattention may easily disturb our tranquillity. In addition, we are apt to be impatient and irritable. Little things get on our nerves. Above all, we are apt to feel a sense of neglect—a piercing realization that we are *alone*. For hours at a stretch we have no company. If we should have

visitors, we might not have any chance of recuperating. And yet we feel keenly the need of human consolation. Through all these disturbances of mind and emotion, the sacrament of extreme unction is at work. God, through its efficacy, keeps touching the soul, keeps soothing it like a balmy breeze on a sultry night. Inability to pray is tintured with a firm trust in God. Loneliness is mitigated by the surging realization that God is all and that His society alone is all we need.

But we may also be alarmed by thoughts of the future. Our glazed eyes stray to the window and take in a misty view of the world outside—the sunny sky or the verdant garden. “I may never see them again in this world after today. Tomorrow the rest of the community will rise as usual and I shall not be among them.” It takes dangerous illness to make us realize how strong is our attachment to this ephemeral world; and the sense of being torn from it may raise a veritable tumult in our soul. Then there is that crucial moment of death itself, when body and soul will be severed, and perhaps we shrink from it and from the possible agony which may precede it. Spiritual hazards, too, may lie ahead. Because of our sickness, we seem like rudderless boats and we worry perhaps about our ability to steer God’s course safely. But extreme unction will be our substitute rudder. Through its graces we shall have the courage to face the pain of separation. We shall offer our impending physical sufferings in union with the suffering Christ, and a humble confidence in God will buoy us up to grapple successfully with any temptation whatever.

In addition to strengthening the soul, extreme unction has within itself the power to remove all our past unforgiven venial sins. A minority of theologians believe that this effect is procured only indirectly. They believe, namely, that the sacrament inspires us with such strong

inclinations to love of God and general piety that if we utilize these graces, we shall delete all our venial sins. This is not the preferred opinion, however. Most theologians maintain that this effect results automatically from the sacrament. It depends not on utilizing the graces arising from the sacrament, but on a voluntary act of virtue made at the time we receive it or shortly before. This act of virtue is one of imperfect contrition for all our venial sins. Some theologians would demand even less than this, but it is quite certain that if we do sincerely make an act of imperfect contrition for all past unforgiven venial sins—even though we do not, since we cannot, recall each one individually—they are at once remitted in their entirety. Such an act of sorrow should be easy for any religious.

However, sin is not the only obstacle to immediate access to heaven. We may be weighed down by a great debt of temporal punishment for past forgiven sins, and it is not quite so easy to rid ourselves of this by reception of the sacrament. Unquestionably the sacrament *can* do so, since its very aim is to escort the soul into heaven at once; and undoubtedly it can do so by its *own inherent efficacy*. In other words, the removal of all our temporal punishment does not depend on our cooperation or non-cooperation with the graces flowering from the sacrament, but upon our own subjective, voluntary disposition at the time we receive it. Just as damp wood impedes the burning action of fire, so a lack of the required disposition may prevent extreme unction from blotting out every last vestige of our temporal punishment, though it will always remove some of this by the mere fact that we have received the sacrament worthily.

What then is the necessary disposition on our part in order to gain this effect? Quite probably an act of attrition (imperfect contrition), but one of greater perfection

than that required to delete all our venial sins. But how perfect does it have to be? We do not know for sure, but reliable authors say that it must be more fervent than that required by baptism in an adult and less fervent than that demanded by confession in order that these sacraments may remove all temporal punishment. Baptism wipes away all temporal punishment in the adult who makes a valid act of attrition, even though it be of the lowest degree. Confession, on the other hand, exacts a more perfect attrition, not that sins may be forgiven by it, but that the entire mass of temporal punishment may be carried away. The attrition of the average penitent is hardly sufficient to enable his confession to annihilate all his temporal punishment. In extreme unction, then, a lesser sorrow would be necessary to remove all temporal punishment than is required in the sacrament of penance. Such an act of attrition should not be difficult for a sick religious to make. In fact, an act of perfect contrition for all sins, or of perfect love for God, should be easy for religious; and it appears beyond dispute that such an act coupled with the sacrament would make the soul ready for immediate entrance into glory. Any tiny debt of temporal punishment incurred between the reception of the sacrament and death would be forgiven either through the prayers and good works of the ailing person, or by Holy Communion, or by indulgences, particularly by the plenary indulgence attached to the Apostolic Benediction which is conferred immediately after extreme unction but which suspends its effect until the very moment of death.

In view of all this, certainly we should not say that very few persons receive the full effect of extreme unction. Since this sacrament has been instituted by Christ to conduct souls directly into heaven, it is surely no compliment to the merciful Savior to say that He established the sacra-

ment for this purpose but has made the conditions for realizing it so difficult that hardly any one can ever hope to escape purgatory by receiving it. As Father Kern, S.J., perhaps the foremost authority on extreme unction, puts it: "It would hardly savor of piety to think that this sacrament produces its full effect only in comparatively isolated instances."

Another remarkable, yet secondary and conditioned, effect of extreme unction is that it sometimes restores bodily health to the sick person. This fact is certain and is defined doctrine. The cure itself may be miraculous, but this is not ordinarily the case. Hence, if the sick person is to recover from his malady, he should receive the sacrament before his natural physical forces are exhausted. But even though he does receive it in plenty of time, he may not get well since this effect always depends on the condition expressed by the Council of Trent, "*ubi salutis animae expeditur*." This Latin phrase is susceptible of two translations, either of which is admissible. If we translate it, "if it conduces to the soul's salvation," then we mean that the sick person regains his health only if his salvation hinges upon restored health. Thus even the greatest saints who did not attain this effect from extreme unction would have lost their souls had they lived longer. Thus, too, people who have recovered from their illness through the sacrament are predestined and can not lose their souls even though they should live for many years. This opinion may be held safely, but its conclusions are so difficult to admit that the majority of theologians today prefer to translate the Council's phrase: "if it conduces to the soul's welfare." This means that if restoration of bodily health will aid in bringing about the perfect cleansing of the soul at the time of the sacrament's reception, and *only then*, health will result from the sacrament. In other words, an

improvement in health may in some cases be a great aid towards fostering courage and confidence and for cooperating with the graces of the sacrament. When this is the case the sacrament will automatically restore bodily vigor partially and sometimes even completely. Just *how* this is accomplished is debatable, but the fact itself is not only part of our faith, but is attested by the experience of priests, doctors, and nurses.

One other singular aspect of the sacrament of extreme unction should be mentioned. Though a sacrament of the living, it partakes in a special way of the nature of a sacrament of the dead, and under certain conditions it can blot out even mortal sin. Suppose that a Catholic were to commit a mortal sin today, and that tonight, before retiring, he would make an act of *imperfect* contrition. During the night he becomes seriously ill and lapses into unconsciousness before he thinks about making an act of perfect contrition or has the opportunity of receiving the sacrament of penance. The mortal sin is still unforgiven; but if he were to be anointed while unconscious, he would regain the state of grace through the efficacy of extreme unction. He would, of course, have the obligation of confessing the mortal sin later if he recovered consciousness and confession were possible, just as a man has the obligation of confessing mortal sins even though he has made an act of perfect contrition for them.

The fact that extreme unction can remit mortal sins is commonly admitted by theologians today, and it is an important truth to keep in mind. It indicates that this sacrament may be the only certain means of salvation for many unconscious dying persons and thus shows us the urgency of calling a priest to administer the sacrament.

Such are the effects of extreme unction. Its general purpose is to make us ready for God's handclasp the



moment we die. To achieve this, it strengthens us against the trials preceding death, it remits all venial sins and all temporal punishment if we do our part. This sacrament explains the statement of Oliver Wendell Holmes: "So far as I have observed persons nearing the end of life, the Roman Catholics understand the business of dying better than Protestants. I have seen a good many Roman Catholics on their dying beds and it has always appeared to me that they accepted the inevitable with a composure which showed that their belief, whether or not the best to live by, was a better one to die by than most of the harder creeds that have replaced it." Holy Simeon pronounced his *Nunc dimittis* with the child Jesus in his arms. We pronounce our *Nunc dimittis* in the arms of Jesus through the graces coming from extreme unction.

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## Books Received

(From June 20 to August 20)

THE LITURGICAL CONFERENCE, Chicago.

*National Liturgical Week: 1944.*

FREDERICK PUSTET CO., New York.

*The Holy Sacrifice.* By Peter Wachter, O.S.B. \$2.50. *Further Discourses on the Holy Ghost.* By Rev. L. M. Dooley, S.V.D. (Ed.). \$2.50.

BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY, Milwaukee.

*Augustine's Quest of Wisdom.* By Vernon J. Bourke, Ph.D. \$3.00.

THE NEWMAN BOOKSHOP, Westminster, Maryland.

*Moral Theology.* By Rev. Heribert Jone, O.F.M.Cap., J.C.D. \$3.00.

FIELD AFAR PRESS, New York.

*Maryknoll Mission Letters, Vol. I, 1945.* 50 cents.

THE SODALITY OF ST. PETER CLAVER, St. Louis.

*The Servant of God Mary Theresa Countess Ledochowska.* By Valeria Bielak. \$1.50.



## Spiritual Readings from the Council of Trent

Augustine Klaas, S.J.

**F**OUR hundred years ago, towards the obscure little town of Trent in southwest Tyrol could be seen converging for many weeks cardinals, bishops, abbots, priests, religious of divers orders, legates of Emperor Charles V and of other sovereigns, soldiers, retainers, and servants. They came singly or in picturesque cavalcades, riding on horse or mule-back, carried in ornamented litters, jolting along in lumbering wagons, or trudging on foot through the luxuriant valley of the Etsch. Their features, speech, dress, and customs bespoke the universality of Christendom.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, December 13, 1545, after marching in procession through the streets singing the *Veni Creator*, the distinguished ecclesiastics convened in solemn assembly in the choir of Trent's Romanesque cathedral, dedicated to Saint Vigilius, to open with a High Mass of the Holy Spirit the nineteenth ecumenical council of the Church. It was an impressive and colorful gathering. Present were the three legates of the reigning Pontiff, Paul III, appointed by him to be also the rotating presidents of the council: Cardinal Giovanni del Monte, future Pope Julius III; Cardinal Marcello Cervini, later Pope Marcellus II; and the Englishman, Cardinal Reginald Pole. Present also were Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo, Bishop of Trent, four archbishops, twenty-one bishops, five generals of religious orders, nine canonists, and forty-two theologians, besides many assisting priests and not a few prominent laymen. Except for four Spanish diocesan priests, all the theologians were members of religious orders,

six Dominicans, eighteen Franciscans, five Augustinians, five Carmelites, and four Servites. The Bishop of Bitonto, Cornelio Mussi, a famous Franciscan orator, preached the sermon in Latin.

When Cardinal del Monte, the celebrant of the Mass, had finished the prayers prescribed by the Ceremonial, Tommaso Campeggio, Bishop of Feltre, read in a loud voice from the pulpit the papal Bull *Laetare Jerusalem* convoking the council and another appointing the three legates of the Holy See. Then Cardinal del Monte, with the assent of the bishops, officially proclaimed the council open and fixed January 7, 1546 as the date of the second session. The ceremony closed with a *Te Deum*. Lowly Trent had been catapulted to fame. As an ecumenical city it now ranked on a par with and even above Nicea, Ephesus, Constantinople, Chalcedon, Lyons, Florence, and all the rest, because the council held within its walls was undoubtedly the most momentous and successful of the twenty ecumenical councils of the Church.

The Council of Trent had not been easy to convoke. As early as 1518 Martin Luther had hypocritically appealed from Pope Leo X to an ecumenical council hoping in this way to avoid the condemnation of his errors in Rome. Protestants after him had repeatedly demanded a general council. The succeeding Popes and Emperor Charles V were sincerely for it, but ecclesiastical and political obstacles rose up again and again to block the way and so it was put off for years. Francis I, "most Christian king of the French," had not always lived up to his title, and England's Henry the Eighth was a troublemaker, too. Finally, just when the way was clear and the council ready to be summoned, the Protestants rejected it and refused to appear at Trent. The Pope reluctantly determined to hold the long overdue council without them.

The principal objective of the Council of Trent was twofold: first, the condemnation and rooting out of Protestant heresies by clearly defining the Catholic doctrines attacked; and secondly, the carrying through of the long needed reform of the Church's inner life by removing the abuses that had crept in. It was decided to treat doctrinal and disciplinary matters simultaneously in the council.

Twenty-five ecumenical sessions were held, the number of attending Fathers and theologians fluctuating but generally increasing as time went on. Three main periods may be distinguished. The first, under Pope Paul III, lasted from 1545 to 1549; during this time ten sessions were held, the last two at Bologna, whither the council had removed because of a threatened plague at Trent. Back at Trent once more, the second period opened under Pope Julius III and went from 1551 to 1552, covering sessions eleven to sixteen. After a suspension of ten years, the council reconvened under Pius IV and held the remaining nine sessions during 1562 and 1563.

Some of the most important doctrinal decrees were those dealing with Holy Scripture, original sin, justification, the sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the veneration of the saints, and indulgences. Reform decrees were passed concerning episcopal jurisdiction, the bishop's obligation of residence in his diocese, legal matters and the morals of the clergy, and the seminary training of candidates for Holy Orders. Others pertained to religious, their vows, their novitiate, their obligation of cloister, and so on.

Finally, on December 4, 1563, when all business had been duly dispatched, Cardinal Morone, papal legate and last president of the council, intoned the *Te Deum*, and when it had been chanted, officially closed the council with the words: "Most Reverend Fathers, go in peace." All answered with a hearty "Amen." All present then signed

the acts of the council: there were four cardinal-legates, two cardinals, three patriarchs, twenty-five archbishops, one hundred and sixty-seven bishops, seven generals of religious orders, seven abbots, and nineteen procurators who signed in the name of the thirty-three absent prelates. The following year, January 26, 1564, Pope Pius IV issued the bull of confirmation and stipulated that the decrees would be effective as of May 1, 1564. Nineteen years had elapsed since the opening of the first session in the cathedral of Trent.

Of all the ecumenical councils of the Church, Trent was the longest in time, the richest in doctrinal content, the most efficacious in repelling error and in reforming the moral and disciplinary life of the Church. "With rejuvenated and reintegrated strength Catholicism could now face the Protestant world," wrote the hostile historian Ranke. Indeed, the Council of Trent was the Church's mighty answer to the Protestant Reformation. It was to be the corner-stone of the counter-reformation. On it the Church still continues to build.

In this fourth centenary year is it not fitting that we reread the decrees of the Council of Trent, at least, the more important ones? During the year priests and religious can make these decrees the subject of very profitable spiritual reading, because they deal with many revealed truths that are basic in the spiritual life. Sound spirituality must always be deeply rooted in revealed dogma. As an aid to such spiritual reading I have selected the sections on Justification, Penance, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the Eucharist. Since their Scriptural and dogmatic content are extremely meaty, the reading should be slow and meditative. The second method of prayer of the Spiritual Exercises can also be fruitfully employed on these inspiring truths.

Except for some omissions of text and references I am indebted for the following selections to *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, edited by the Rev. H. J. Schroeder, O.P., Herder, 1941.

*Justification through Christ*

The holy council declares first, that for a correct and clear understanding of the doctrine of justification, it is necessary that each one recognize and confess that since all men had lost innocence in the prevarication of Adam (1), having become unclean (2), and as the Apostle says, *by nature children of wrath* (3), as has been set forth in the decree on original sin, they were so far *the servants of sin* (4) and under the power of the devil and of death, that not only the Gentiles by the force of nature, but not even the Jews by the very letter of the law of Moses, were able to be liberated or to rise therefrom, though free will, weakened as it was in its powers and downward bent, was by no means extinguished in them.

Whence it came to pass that the heavenly Father, *the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort* (5), *when the blessed fulness of the time was come* (6), sent to men Jesus Christ, His own Son, who had both before the law and during the time of law been announced and promised to many of the holy fathers (7), *that he might redeem the Jews who were under the law* (8), and *that the Gentiles who followed not after justice* (9) might attain to justice, and that all men might receive the adoption of sons. Him has God *proposed as a propitiator through faith in his blood* (10) *for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for those of the whole world.* (11)

But though *He died for all* (12), yet all do not receive the benefit of His death, but those only to whom the merit of His passion is communicated; because as truly as men would not be born unjust, if they were not born through propagation of the seed of Adam, since by that propagation they contract through him, when they are conceived, injustice as their own, so if they were not born again in Christ, they would never be justified, since in that new birth there is bestowed upon them, through the merit of His passion, the grace by which

- 1) Romans 5:12;  
I Corinthians 15:22
- 2) Isaias 64:6
- 3) Ephesians 2:3
- 4) Romans 6:17, 20

- 5) See II Corinthians 1:3
- 6) Galatians 4:4
- 7) Genesis 49:10, 18
- 8) Galatians 4:5

- 9) Romans 9:30
- 10) Romans 3:25
- 11) See I John 2:2
- 12) See II Corinthians 5:15

they are made just. For this benefit the Apostle exhorts us always *to give thanks to the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, and hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have redemption and remission of sins.* (13)

In which words is given a brief description of the justification of the sinner, as being a translation from that state in which man is born a child of the first Adam, to the state of grace and of the adoption of the sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Savior. This translation however cannot, since the promulgation of the Gospel, be effected except through the laver of regeneration or its desire, as it is written: *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* (14)

#### *Preparation for Justification*

It is furthermore declared that in adults the beginning of that justification must proceed from the predisposing grace of God through Jesus Christ, that is, from His vocation, whereby, without any merits on their part, they are called; that they who by sin had been cut off from God, may be disposed through His quickening and helping grace to convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to and cooperating with that grace; so that, while God touches the heart of man through the illumination of the Holy Ghost, man himself neither does absolutely nothing while receiving that inspiration, since he can also reject it, nor yet is he able by his own free will and without the grace of God to move himself to justice in His sight. Hence, when it is said in the sacred writings: *Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you* (15), we are reminded of our liberty; and when we reply: *Convert us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be converted* (16), we confess that we need the grace of God.

Now, they (the adults) are disposed to that justice when, aroused and aided by divine grace, receiving *faith by hearing* (17), they are moved freely toward God, believing to be true what has been divinely revealed and promised, especially that the sinner is justified by God *by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (18); and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves from the fear of divine justice, by which they are

13) Colossians 1:12-14

15) Zacharias 1:3

17) Romans 10:17

14) John 3:5

16) Lamentations 5:21

18) Romans 3:24

salutarily aroused, to consider the mercy of God, are raised to hope, trusting that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake; and they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice, and on that account are moved against sin by a certain hatred and detestation, that is, by that repentance that must be performed before baptism; finally, when they resolve to receive baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God. Of this disposition it is written: *He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and is a rewarder to them that seek him* (19); and, *Be of good faith, son, thy sins are forgiven thee* (20); and, *The fear of the Lord driveth out sin* (21); and, *Do penance, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost* (22); and, *Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you* (23); finally, *Prepare your hearts unto the Lord*. (24)

#### *Nature and Causes of Justification*

This disposition or preparation is followed by justification itself, which is not only a remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man through the voluntary reception of the grace and gifts whereby an unjust man becomes just and from being an enemy becomes a friend, that he may be *an heir according to hope of life everlasting*. (25) The causes of this justification are: the final cause is the glory of God and of Christ and life everlasting; the efficient cause is the merciful God who *washes and sanctifies* (26) gratuitously, signing and anointing *with the holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance* (27); the meritorious cause is His most beloved only begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, *when we were enemies* (28), *for the exceeding charity wherewith he loved us* (29), merited for us justification by His most holy passion on the wood of the cross and made satisfaction for us to God the Father; the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which no man was ever justified; finally, the single formal cause is the justice of God, not that by which He

19) Hebrews 11:6

20) Matthew 9:2;

Mark 2:5

21) Ecclesiasticus 1:27

22) Acts 2:38

23) Matthew 28:19 f

24) See I Kings 7:3

25) Titus 3:7

26) See I Corinthians 6:11

27) Ephesians 1:13 f

28) Romans 5:10

29) Ephesians 2:4



Himself is just, but that by which He makes us just, that, namely, with which we being endowed by Him, are *renewed in the spirit of our mind* (30), and not only are we reputed but we are truly called and are just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to everyone as He wills (31), and according to each one's disposition and cooperation. For though no one can be just except he to whom the merits of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet this takes place in that justification of the sinner, when by the merit of the most holy passion, *the charity of God is poured forth by the Holy Ghost in the hearts* (32) of those who are justified and inheres in them; whence man through Jesus Christ, in whom he is ingrafted, receives in that justification, together with the remission of sins, all these infused at the same time, namely, faith, hope and charity. For faith, unless hope and charity be added to it, neither unites man perfectly with Christ nor makes him a living member of His body. For which reason it is most truly said that *faith without works is dead* (33) and of no profit, and *in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by charity*. (34) This faith, conformably to Apostolic tradition, catechumens ask of the Church before the sacrament of baptism, when they ask for the faith that gives eternal life, which without hope and charity faith cannot give. Whence also they hear immediately the word of Christ: *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*. (35) Wherefore, when receiving true and Christian justice, they are commanded, immediately on being born again, to preserve it pure and spotless, as the *first robe* (36) given them through Christ Jesus in place of that which Adam by his disobedience lost for himself and for us, so that they may bear it before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ and may have life eternal.

#### Increase of Justification

Having, therefore, been thus justified and made the friends and domestics of God (37), advancing from virtue to virtue (38), they are *renewed*, as the Apostle says, *day by day* (39), that is, mortifying

- 30) Ephesians 4:23  
31) See I Corinthians 12:11  
32) Romans 5:5

- 33) James 2:17, 20  
34) Galatians 5:6;  
6:15  
35) Matthew 19:17

- 36) Luke 15:22  
37) Ephesians 2:19  
38) Psalms 83:8  
39) See II Corinthians 4:16



the members (40) of their flesh, and presenting them as instruments of justice unto sanctification (41), they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith cooperating with good works, increase in that justice received through the grace of Christ and are further justified, as it is written: *He that is just, let him be justified still* (42); and, *Be not afraid to be justified even to death* (43); and again, *Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only?* (44) This increase of justice holy Church asks for when she prays: "Give unto us, O Lord, an increase of faith, hope and charity." (45)

But no one, however much justified, should consider himself exempt from the observance of the commandments; no one should use that rash statement, once forbidden by the Fathers under anathema, that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified. For God does not command impossibilities, but by commanding admonishes thee to do what thou canst and to pray for what thou canst not, and aids thee that thou mayest be able. *His commandments are not heavy* (46), and *his yoke is sweet and burden light*. (47) For they who are the sons of God love Christ, but they who love Him, keep His commandments, as He Himself testifies (48); which, indeed, with the divine help they can do. For though during this mortal life, men, however holy and just, fall at times into at least light and daily sins, which are also called venial, they do not on that account cease to be just, for that petition of the just, *forgive us our trespasses* (49), is both humble and true; for which reason the just ought to feel themselves the more obliged to walk in the way of justice, for *being now freed from sin and made servants of God* (50), they are able, *living soberly, justly and godly* (51), to proceed onward through Jesus Christ, by whom they have access unto this grace. (52) For God does not forsake those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them. Wherefore, no one ought to flatter himself with faith alone, thinking that by faith alone he is made an heir and will obtain the inheritance, even though *he suffer not with Christ, that he may be also glorified with him*. (53) For even Christ Himself, as the

40) Colossians 3:5

41) Romans 6:13, 19

42) Apocalypse 22:11

43) Ecclesiasticus 18:22

44) James 2:24

45) Thirteenth Sunday  
after Pentecost

46) See I John 5:3

47) Matthew 11:30

48) John 14:23

49) Matthew 6:12

50) Romans 6:18, 22

51) Titus 2:12

52) Romans 5: 1 f

53) Romans 8:17

Apostle says, *whereas he was the Son of God, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and being consummated, he became to all who obey him the cause of eternal salvation.* (54) For which reason the same Apostle admonishes those justified, saying: *Know you not that they who run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain. I therefore, so run, not as at an uncertainty; I so fight, not as one beating the air, but I chastise my body and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway.* (55) So also the prince of the Apostles, Peter: *Labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election. For doing these things, you shall not sin at any time.* (56) From which it is clear that they are opposed to the orthodox teaching of religion who maintain that the just man sins, venially at least, in every good work; or, what is more intolerable, that he merits eternal punishment; and they also who assert that the just sin in all works, if, in order to arouse their sloth and to encourage themselves to run the race, they, in addition to this, that above all God may be glorified, have in view also the eternal reward, since it is written: *I have inclined my heart to do thy justifications on account of the reward* (57); and of Moses the Apostle says; that *he looked unto the reward.* (58)

#### *Justification Lost and Restored*

Those who through sin have forfeited the received grace of justification, can again be justified when, moved by God, they exert themselves to obtain through the sacrament of penance the recovery, by the merits of Christ, of the grace lost. For this manner of justification is restoration for those fallen, which the holy Fathers have aptly called a second plank after the shipwreck of grace lost. For on behalf of those who fall into sins after baptism, Christ Jesus instituted the sacrament of penance when He said: *Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.* (59) Hence, it must be taught that the repentance of a Christian after his fall is very different from that at his baptism, and that it includes not only a determination to avoid sins and a hatred of them, or a *contrite and humble heart* (60),

54) Hebrews 5:8 f  
55) See I Corinthians  
9:24, 26 f

56) See II Peter 1:10  
57) Psalms 118:112  
58) Hebrews 11:26

59) John 20:22 f  
60) Psalms 50:19

but also the sacramental confession of those sins, at least in desire, to be made in its season, and sacerdotal absolution, as well as satisfaction by fasts, alms, prayers and other devout exercises of the spiritual life, not indeed for the eternal punishment, which is, together with the guilt, remitted either by the sacrament or by the desire of the sacrament, but for the temporal punishment which, as the sacred writings teach, is not always wholly remitted, as is done in baptism, to those who, ungrateful to the grace of God which they have received, have grieved the Holy Ghost (61) and have not feared to *violate the temple of God*. (62) Of which repentance it is written: *Be mindful whence thou art fallen; do penance, and do the first works* (63); and again, *The sorrow that is according to God worketh penance, steadfast unto salvation* (64); and again, *Do penance, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance*. (65)

#### Fruits of Justification: Merit

Therefore, to men justified in this manner, whether they have preserved uninterruptedly the grace received or recovered it when lost, are to be pointed out the words of the Apostle: *Abound in every good work, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*. (66) *For God is not unjust, that he should forget your work, and the love which you have shown in his name* (67); and, *Do not lose your confidence, which hath a great reward*. (68) Hence, to those who work well *unto the end* (69) and trust in God, eternal life is to be offered, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Christ Jesus, and as a reward promised by God Himself, to be faithfully given to their good works and merits. (70) For this is the crown of justice which after his fight and course the Apostle declared was laid up for him, to be rendered to him by the just judge, and not only him, but also to all that love his coming. (71) For since Christ Jesus Himself, as the head into the members and the vine into the branches (72), continually infuses strength into those justified, which strength always precedes, accompanies and follows their good works, and without which they could not in any manner be

61) Ephesians 4:30

62) See I Corinthians 3:17

63) Apocalypse 2:5

64) See II Corinthians 7:10

65) Matthew 3:2;

4:17; Luke 3:8

66) See I Corinthians

15:58

67) Hebrews 6:10

68) Hebrews 10:35

69) Matthew 10:22

70) Romans 6:22

71) See II Timothy 4:8

72) John 15:1 f

pleasing and meritorious before God, we must believe that nothing further is wanting to those justified to prevent them from being considered to have, by those very works which have been done in God, fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life, and to have truly merited eternal life, to be obtained in its (due) time, provided they depart (this life) in grace (73), since Christ our Savior says: *If anyone shall drink of the water that I will give him, he shall not thirst forever; but it shall become in him a fountain of water springing up unto life everlasting.* (74) Thus, neither is our own justice established as our own from ourselves (75), nor is the justice of God ignored or repudiated, for that justice which is called ours, because we are justified by its inherence in us, that same is (the justice) of God, because it is infused into us by God through the merit of Christ. Nor must this be omitted, that although in the sacred writings so much is attributed to good works, that even *he that shall give a drink of cold water to one of his least ones*, Christ promises, *shall not lose his reward* (76); and the Apostle testifies that, *That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory* (77): nevertheless, far be it that a Christian should either trust or glory in himself and not in the Lord (78), whose bounty toward all men is so great that He wishes the things that are His gifts to be their merits. And since *in many things we all offend* (79), each one ought to have before his eyes not only the mercy and goodness but also the severity and judgment (of God); neither ought anyone to judge himself, even though he be not conscious to himself of anything (80); because the whole life of man is to be examined and judged not by the judgment of man but of God, *who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise from God* (81), who, as it is written, *will render to every man according to his works.* (82)

(To be concluded)

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73) Apocalypse 14:13

74) John 4:13 f

75) Romans 10:3;  
II Corinthians 3:5

76) Matthew 10:42;  
Mark 9:40

77) See II Corinthians  
4:17

78) See I Corinthians  
1:31; II Corinthians  
10:17

79) James 3:2

80) See I Corinthians  
4:3 f

81) I Corinthians 4:5

82) Matthew 16:27;  
Romans 2:6; Apoc-  
alypse 22:12

## "Aufer a Nobis"

James A. Kleist, S.J.

THERE is a wealth of fuel stored up in the *wording* of the missal, particularly in the Ordinary of the Mass, which needs only the touch of devotion to set the soul on fire in its effort to foster *private* prayer. In a very true sense the missal is the great everyday Catholic prayerbook, and its use *outside the Mass* may well be recommended. One illustration will be enough to indicate how this wealth may be drawn upon for the enrichment of one's spiritual life.

As the priest ascends the altar steps after saying the Confiteor with its train of versicles and responses, he recites the *Aufer a nobis*. He is about "to enter the holy of holies." This expression, borrowed from the Old Testament (Numbers 4:19), was the name for the most sacred part of the Jewish tabernacle, and later of the Temple, in which the ark of the covenant was kept, and where no one was permitted to enter except the high priest—and he only once a year. In the New Dispensation, every Catholic church is a holy of holies, a place which the Real Presence makes much holier than the Jewish holy of holies could ever be.

Now, in ascending the altar steps, the priest is directed to offer this beautiful prayer: "Take away from us our sins, we beg, O Lord, that by Thy grace<sup>1</sup> we may enter the holy of holies with minds that have been purified, through Christ our Lord. Amen." As in almost all the prayers of the Mass, the priest, though thinking of himself in particular, uses the plural number, since he is offering the sacrifice

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<sup>1</sup>The rendering "that by Thy grace we may enter" is more expressive than the current version, "that we may be made more worthy to enter." The Latin word *mereamur* is often used in the Missal to emphasize, not so much our *worthiness* to do this or that, as the fact that we are doing this or that *by God's grace or through His mercy*.

both for us and with us. At this point of the Mass, then, our minds have been purified by the public act of contrition, the Confiteor, but its echoes have not yet wholly died away; it is rounded out and finished by the *Aufer a nobis* and the following *Oramus te, Domine*. Is it not remarkable what amount of time, comparatively speaking, the Church assigns to this act of cleansing the heart from even the faintest traces of sin at the beginning of the sacred function, an amount that seems almost out of proportion to the more important parts of the sacrifice—the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion? But, instead of questioning the wisdom of the Church, we shall do well to take a hint from the Liturgy for the sanctification of our lives. The Church's mind is, of course, clear: we cannot reasonably approach God for His favors, as we do at Mass, while unrepented sin still lingers in the soul. Hence there is the everpressing need of asking that, in His mercy, He may blot out in us what is displeasing to Him.

So much for the place and function of the *Aufer a nobis* within the framework of the Mass. It is important for us to realize, however, that the Church's prayers, although designed for some particular liturgical action, may yet be fittingly employed by us in numerous situations *outside the Mass*. This being so, it is easy to see how occasions may arise in daily life when the *Aufer a nobis* will come as a welcome relief to the burdened soul when relief is sorely needed, or will inspire such reverence as the presence of God should inspire.

To illustrate. Some day is bound to be our last day on earth, and we shall find ourselves at the door of eternity. Beyond the threshold, there is the true holy of holies, the place where God thrones in all His majesty, the reality rather than its earthly type or shadow. It is then that we shall be confronted with the question, whether our minds

are sufficiently purified to enter. We trust in God's mercy, of course; but surely, if the *Aufer a nobis*, which is familiar to us from the Mass, has taken a definite hold on us and secured a definite place in our round of favorite aspirations, it will spontaneously rise to our lips at the moment when the need for it is most urgent. The familiar holy of holies of the *Aufer a nobis* will then widen out into the as yet unfamiliar courts of heaven. Surely, we shall feel relieved to find that we have yet time for one last fervent prayer for forgiveness. And will this prayer not be all the more acceptable, all the more hearty, because it presents itself in words which, through frequent repetition while we were still in good health, have become a ready vehicle of its meaning even when the mind is at its weariest in the last illness?

To the saints the thought of death was an ever-present reality. May we not make it such in our own life, too? There is a very unobtrusive way of doing it—provided we accustom ourselves to recite the *Aufer a nobis*, not only during Mass but frequently outside the Mass, with a view to preparing for entry into that heavenly holy of holies. Of its aptness for voicing our petition for a special grace in the hour of death, there can be no doubt. This does not mean that it should supplant any other more formal prayers "for a happy death," but it does mean that a prayer framed by the Church for a specific occasion—as in the case of the *Aufer a nobis* at the beginning of the Mass—may, by reason of its catholicity of expression, be utilized on other occasions when the fundamental idea (here, the entry into the holy of holies) is the same. This principle is of no small advantage in the spiritual life. Indeed, what need is there for multiplying prayers when there is a prayer in the treasury of the Church, known to us from other uses, which is ready to hand and only waits to be used? For unction



and terseness of expression, at all events, we should find it difficult to match the prayers of the universal Church.

But the availability of the *Aufer a nobis* as a cry for mercy is not thus exhausted. Let us think for a moment of the significant *a nobis*. The Church loves to use the plural number in her official language. It is one of her ways of impressing upon us the consoling doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. "One for all and all for one" is a principle the Church never loses sight of in her prayers. Consequently, then, if the *Aufer a nobis* reminds us through habitual practice of our death, it will also put us in mind of the thousands of men and women who at this very moment are on the point of departing this life.

We love our neighbor as ourselves; we are interested in the well-being of our fellow creatures and cannot help wondering whether they are prepared, or unprepared, to face their eternal Judge. The question is one of keen anxiety to us, because we see in them potential fellow citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem; because their eternal salvation is at stake; because, finally, so far as they are concerned, our Lord's redemptive work is now rendered either wholly nugatory or eminently useful. And so, if we live in this supernatural atmosphere, we shall be desirous of praying frequently for the dying; and what more natural aspiration could we find for this purpose than our familiar *Aufer a nobis*?

It seems so Christian to pray for the dying! Many of them have not had our opportunities for keeping the commandments; many of them were in their earliest years thrown into the whirlpool of life with its myriad temptations; many of them have, for one reason or another, been strangers to the sacramental facilities of the Church. And yet, whatever their state of soul may be, here they are, at this moment, when a final decision must be made! Let us

hasten to their assistance by accustoming ourselves to include them in our *Aufer a nobis*. We need not know their names, or who and where they happen to be at the moment. Neither national nor any other accidental boundaries can separate us from them. Our ability to help them is bounded only by God's goodness, and that is boundless. Nor will our charity be a loss to ourselves. A supernatural act, no matter how good it is in itself, is made still better by an additional touch of charity. As we include the dying in our *Aufer a nobis*, so there are other devout souls that will include us in theirs. Indeed, even were they to forget to give us the benefit of their intercession, the Lord will certainly not forget the helping hand we have so often reached out to the dying.

It is quite clear, then, that the *Aufer a nobis*, if once discovered and eagerly mined for its precious ore, holds rich possibilities for the spiritual prospector. Let me call attention to one more such possibility. In religious communities the custom prevails at stated times of visiting the Blessed Sacrament in a body, or privately according to one's devotion. In some houses the domestic chapel is reached only by a long hall or passage, and the purpose of this wise arrangement is to allow the religious sufficient time for collecting their thoughts. Now, a chapel in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept is as truly a holy of holies as heaven itself, and it is obvious that the recital of the *Aufer a nobis* on the way to it is a very appropriate means of insuring the needed recollection. In fact, it is a fitting prelude to any prayer, whether said in chapel or in one's private room. In prayer we stand before the Divine Majesty; and sorrow for sin is an infallible key to entry into that holy of holies, as we are reminded by another prayer in the Ordinary of the Mass: "In humble frame of mind and with heartfelt grief for sin, we beg, O Lord, to be received by Thee: may our

sacrifice be so offered in Thy sight this day as to be pleasing to Thee, O Lord God."

Those who are acquainted with the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius will remember how he insists that, before we begin to pray, we should pause a while and reflect where we are going and for what purpose. "Before prayer," says the Scripture, "prepare thy soul." And here, too, as I said above, it is well to lay stress on the plural number. At the same time with ourselves there are countless souls all over the world about to betake themselves to prayer. A heart-felt *Aufer a nobis* will bind us into one solid body of worshippers who come before God, not relying so much on our own merits as on the combined cry for mercy that rises from the lips and hearts of all God's children. As members of the Church we are never alone, never wrapt up in our own concerns and miseries: we are always acting as a powerful group made confident by the support of the intercession and merits of the saints both on earth and in heaven. The prayers of one benefit all those that are united by bonds stronger than those of flesh and blood or other purely accidental circumstances.

But enough. By singling out the *Aufer a nobis* I merely intended to show what a rich treasure the missal holds for all who wish to profit by it for their own spiritual advancement. It would be easy to multiply illustrations. "Seek, and you shall find." A certain holy ingenuity will supply anyone with a great number of brief prayers or ejaculations from the missal for almost any circumstance in life. Ejaculatory prayer, by the way, is a veritable necessity in our busy life. How else can the fire of the morning meditation be sustained throughout the busy hours of the day? Besides, one may not always command a somewhat extended stretch of time for formal prayer; but no one is too busy at any time to raise his heart to God by a swift and

heartfelt aspiration. And one of the most suited to our circumstances is, surely, the *Aufer a nobis*; for, if the Church's practice is a safe and sure norm, it is clear that the removal of sin from the soul is one of the best approaches to the holy of holies, that "throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16) where we may "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

The reader of this brief exhortation to use the missal as a quarry for private prayer is, of course, aware that, in dealing with the *Aufer a nobis*, I have made free use of what biblical scholars call "the accommodated sense." No one acquainted with the missal will find anything strange in this; for, as a matter of fact, the Church herself takes ample liberties with Scripture texts in composing the formularies for the various Masses throughout the year. Words found in the Scriptures in their literal sense are freely wrested by her from the original context and applied to the varying needs of the ecclesiastical calendar. The *Aufer a nobis* has a definite place and purpose in the Mass; but we are allowed to use the same words in any sense that they may bear in the special circumstances of life in which we may find ourselves.

The missal is the Church's official prayerbook. May not every one of us follow the example of the Church and make it his favorite prayerbook for all his private needs?

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## The Contribution of Religious to Catholic Action

Francis B. Donnelly

A LETTER addressed in 1936 by the then Secretary of State, Cardinal Pacelli (now of course our present Holy Father), to the Superior Generals of all religious communities throughout the world has never received in this country the attention and the ready compliance that it certainly deserved. Its publication in this issue (pp. 326-328) will serve, therefore, to acquaint our American religious with its contents and to inspire them to respond to the appeal it makes to them. For a careful reading of the letter will convince all religious, and especially teaching religious, that the promotion of Catholic Action is their concern and their responsibility, a duty we may presume they would not wish to ignore or to evade.

Two earlier articles in the REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS treated of certain practical directions for Catholic Action; they told *how* an apostolic program might be carried out.<sup>1</sup> This article has a more fundamental purpose (only touched upon in the earlier articles): to convince all religious, particularly those engaged in teaching, that their active collaboration with Catholic Action is not only desirable, but demanded. This will be established by analyzing the contents of the above letter, bringing out its full implications, and adding some further details from other official pronouncements on the subject.

### *Why All Religious Should Assist*

Having placed great confidence in Catholic Action as an

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<sup>1</sup>Cell Technique of Catholic Action by Albert S. Foley, S.J. (May 15, 1943: pp. 164-175); Leadership in Catholic Action by Youree Watson, S.J. (September 15, 1943: pp. 312-326).

effective means of restoring all things in Christ, the Pope has had these hopes justified by the reports of its progress and success. He knows that religious contributed much to this advance. And being desirous that the movement of Catholic Action should spread and develop everywhere, he now seeks the cooperation of all religious throughout the entire world. The papal idea of Catholic Action has proved workable and practical; it has stood the test of experience. Now let it be taken up everywhere—with the valuable help of religious.

### *Responsibility of Superiors*

Since religious have henceforth a *new* duty to discharge, they must be instructed in its requirements. This calls for special courses of study, at least to the degree that would prepare religious to inspire and even train the faithful for the apostolate of Catholic Action. There will be reason and opportunity, we might add, to impart a more intensive knowledge of its principles to young religious at the time they are being trained for their future work. Cardinal Lepicier, as Prefect of the Congregation for Religious (in a letter of June 27, 1930 regarding the assistance to be given Catholic Action by Italian religious), directed that all teaching religious should be instructed in the nature, statutes, and regulations of Catholic Action, and that in addition a limited number should be given a more specialized training, but entirely in keeping with their calling as educators of Catholic youth. This is a program that all communities might well follow.

Superiors may also cooperate with Catholic Action by aiding it to give the necessary formation to its members. Cardinal Lepicier, in the letter referred to, thanked Italian religious for opening their houses to Catholic Action members for days of study, for retreats, and for other exercises.

Such evidence of interest and charity is particularly desirable in the pioneer days of a Catholic Action movement, since its organization will at that time lack facilities of its own. Of course, this kindness will entail certain inconveniences for religious, but it is by such sacrifices that the body of Christ will increase (1 Cor. XII: 17-26).

### *Preachers and Retreat-Masters*

One specific way in which religious priests may promote the lay apostolate is through their preaching—awakening the faithful to their responsibility for the salvation of souls and helping them to prepare for the apostolate. But it will be in their conferences and retreats to the diocesan clergy that religious preachers will be able to do most for the cause of Catholic Action. Having become fully acquainted themselves with its aims and principles, they will be in a position to speak on the subject knowingly and authoritatively. It will be their duty to set forth clearly the grave obligation incumbent upon the clergy to foster Catholic Action as one of their main pastoral duties. Certainly we can expect that, on the occasion of a retreat or day of recollection, diocesan priests can be stirred most effectively to a greater willingness to respond to the urgent call of the Popes, to clear their minds of prejudice and misunderstanding about the subject, and to use every means possible to seek and to train auxiliary apostles whose burning desire is to bring Christ into *their* world.

### *Invaluable Aid of Teaching Religious*

Religious will aid Catholic Action best by educating youth for it and in it. There is no more fertile soil than youth in which to sow the seed of apostolic action. Religious are the *educators of Catholic youth*, at least as far as formal education is concerned. And Pius XI, repeatedly, insisted that formation in the apostolic spirit (a specific



objective of Catholic Action) is an essential part of education in our day, a complement of formal education. That means it must not be left out of the modern program of Catholic education.

### *Preparation for the Future*

And why is it so important? First, because it gives greater assurance that the students trained for the apostolate will begin, immediately, to live a truly Christian life, a life of real devotion. For to try to conquer others for Christ is the strongest stimulus to conquer oneself. Religion in life becomes a matter of intense conviction. The student makes his daily life an actual test in Christian living, without direct dependence upon the authority of the school and its teachers. He learns to stand on his own feet as a Christian and to influence those around him. Are not all the labors and sacrifices of Christian education meant to achieve just that?

Besides, this apostolic training is the greatest gift religious can bestow upon their pupils. What can surpass the privilege of becoming intimately associated with the priestly apostolate, sharing in the great good it does for mankind? In the mind of the Holy Father such collaboration is a special grace. He has not hesitated even, on another occasion, to dignify the official call to Catholic Action as a *true vocation* inspired by a singular divine grace. Is it not a blessing for a religious to be allowed to sow the seed of that vocation? The wise educator, whose vision extends beyond syllabus and examinations, will not be unmindful of this. He will see Catholic Action as a way to develop a Christian conscience in youth, to awaken a generosity that too often lies dormant. He will envision the invaluable aid that the Church will receive in the future, the great increase of laborers in the vineyard. He will know

that the school is fulfilling its mission. In a word, preparation for life as a Christian calls for training in Catholic Action. For to be a Christian now, one must be an apostle.

### *The Good of the School Itself*

But the educator need not judge the matter merely from the viewpoint of the individual student and his future. Let him see it from the point of view of the school, whose interests are his primary concern. Will not every educator who is honest with himself admit that his influence upon students is limited: by his own shortcomings; by the frictions of everyday contact; above all, by the barrier that many students, particularly those whose need is greatest, set up between themselves and even the most understanding of their teachers? Is not, therefore, an *added* influence necessary in every school—the influence of students upon one another? Such influence will be exerted, no matter what the teachers say or do. Ought it not be channeled and made to serve the cause of Christ?

Cardinal Pacelli's letter, therefore, goes on to say that the apostolic training given to students who are well-disposed will redound to the benefit of the entire student-body. There will be the force of concerted good example. Added to this will be the deliberate, planned effort by the student apostles to win over (*l'azione conquistatrice* are the words used in the letter) the lukewarm among their daily companions. This itself will provide a rich experience in the apostolate, with the result that school life will become a real preparation for work in Catholic Action during vacations or after graduation. It is training such as this that will later enable students to withstand the many formidable evils of modern life, to which all too often graduates of Catholic schools have succumbed, to the great sorrow of their former teachers. Having been taught to

view life critically, to see its defects, to rise above the level of accepted standards, students schooled in the apostolate will not later lack the courage to be light to the world and salt to the earth. They are not apt to disgrace the school and its teachers.

### *Practical Measures*

The above considerations should lead to definite results. The first of these is the establishment of Catholic Action groups *within* the school, "internal associations," as they are called in the letter. A new activity with its own special objective necessitates a distinct organization, and this, the letter points out, has already been recognized in a number of schools. Pius XI on several occasions urged such a step, not only in universities and public schools, but in every secondary school and house of education (letter to the Hierarchy of Colombia, February 14, 1934) and even in elementary schools and academies: "train boys and girls for it from earliest youth in their schools and academies" (letter to the Brazilian Hierarchy, October 27, 1935). Pius XII takes for granted that Catholic Action units will be formed in educational institutions, though he rightly insists they enter the school with due discretion and reserve, seeking only to give greater impetus to the apostolic life of the school (address to Italian Catholic Action, September 4, 1940). In view of these various pronouncements, there can be little doubt but that the Holy See desires real, active Catholic Action groups in all Catholic schools.<sup>2</sup>

There is also need of coordinating this new work with the religious activities already being carried on in the school. Pious societies already established are not to be displaced or de-emphasized, but rather to continue and to grow in

<sup>2</sup>The articles already cited provide valuable suggestions for starting this activity. A recent publication will also prove very helpful: Geissler, *Training of Lay Leaders* (The Apostolate Press, South Bend, Ind.).

accord with their specific purpose. However, as organizations, they are not to stand apart from Catholic Action. They must openly and generously assist its apostolate: by prayer, by emphasizing its importance, and even by encouraging their own members to become part of it. Alumni groups, particularly, should put themselves at the service of Catholic Action and come under its influence. It will do much to keep alive in them the lessons of a Christian education.

### *Spiritual Backing of All Religious*

Every vital activity within the Mystical Body, even that of private prayer, adds strength to the whole Body. For this reason each religious can promote the cause of Catholic Action immeasurably by his own constant prayer and by inducing all under his care or influence to pray for its success. By the power of prayer every member of the Church, each in his own place and in conformity with his vocation, can participate in the great campaign to restore all things, all of life, in Christ. Even contemplative religious (as Cardinal Lepicier observed in his letter) should offer their prayers and their sacrifices for this all-important work.

### *Fruits of Collaboration by Religious*

By aiding Catholic Action, which is so dear to the heart of the Pope, religious will once again have proved their loyalty to Christ's Vicar, answering his urgent call, as they have so often done in the past, promptly and generously. And this time they will respond at an hour that is critical for mankind and especially for youth. By their collaboration they will give evidence of the expanse of their charity for Christ and souls, uniting in complete solidarity with the diocesan clergy to spread the Kingdom of Christ. A whole new field is thereby opened to the zeal and generosity of religious.

But, as is true of all that is done for God and His Church, there will be a return, a recompense. It is good to emphasize this so as to allay any fear that encouraging the young to prepare for an apostolic life in the world might turn some from the priesthood or the religious life. Of course, anyone who really believes that the Pope enjoys divine guidance in the government of the Church would hardly concede that a program enjoined by him so repeatedly and so vigorously could have such a deleterious effect. But it is nevertheless reassuring for all religious to know that, instead of fearing such a consequence, they might rather expect an increase in religious vocations. Cardinal Lepicier gave assurance of that: "they will obtain new vocations for their communities, as we have already had the pleasure of witnessing." In his encyclical on *The Catholic Priesthood*, Pius XI himself testified to the benefits that Catholic Action would confer upon the priesthood and the religious life. On the one hand, Catholic Action would promote vocations to the priesthood as one of its primary duties. On the other hand, as a reward for these efforts, God would "prepare and call very many from [its] youth groups for both clergies [diocesan and religious]. This is added evidence that Catholic Action can rightly be compared to a fertile soil in which every kind of virtue can be found, or better still to a well-sheltered and cared for nursery where even the more fragrant and delicate flowers bloom free from all danger."

### *Suggested Course of Study*

The following is offered as a plan of study in colleges, normal schools, or summer schools for religious to educate them in the function and program of the lay apostolate:

1. *The Need for Catholic Action*: to solve the great problem of our day—*secularization*; Christ is dethroned in His world; He is losing it! A review of the evils condemned by the Popes in their

encyclicals and other messages, v.g., on Christian Marriage, Christian Education, Reconstructing the Social Order (*Quadragesimo Anno*), Atheistic Communism, Motion Pictures, Present World Order (*Summi Pontificatus*), letter to the American Hierarchy (*Sertum Laetitiae*). Modern youth problems.

2. *The Plan of Catholic Action*: theory and guiding principles. The necessary material may be gathered from: *Directives for Catholic Action* (Central Bureau Press, St. Louis); *What Does the Pope Say About Catholic Action* (Pellegrini, Sydney, Australia); *Conferences on Catholic Action, Introduction to Catholic Action* (both N.C. W.C. publications); Civardi, *Manual of Catholic Action*; Lelotte, *Fundamental Principles of Catholic Action* (Fides, Montreal).

3. *Catholic Action Methods*: specialization in approach; successful techniques; relationship of priests and religious with Catholic action; inculcation of the apostolic spirit. The following publications will provide information; Geissler, *Training of Lay Leaders*; Roy, *The Jocist Movement* (JOC, Manchester, N. H.); *The Young Christian Workers* (Burns Oates). Further help can be derived from contact with the YCS at Notre Dame; YCW groups in Chicago, Rochester, San Francisco, New York, Montreal; The Grail (Loveland, Ohio).

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## Decisions of the Holy See

### *Letter on the Promotion of Catholic Action*

sent by the Cardinal Secretary of State  
to the Superiors of all Religious Communities

Well known to Your Reverence are the lively hopes which the Holy Father places in Catholic Action as a means to the Christian restoration of society and the great comfort afforded him by the news coming, even from missionary lands, as to its continued growth and the inestimable benefits which the Lord produces by means of it.

A cause of special consolation has been the generous spirit with which certain Orders and Religious Congregations, both of men and women, have put their members at the service of Catholic Action, who by writing, speaking, and active assistance have helped its growth and assured its success. The August Pontiff himself has had to

express his approval and satisfaction on many occasions; and, in a letter to the Bishops of Brazil last October, he even voiced the hope that the help given by religious communities "would be greater and more extensive than that of any other."

This will certainly be so if, as urged in that important document, special courses of study are instituted to prepare religious for these new tasks in order that by their preaching and manifold works of zeal the faithful may be inspired and trained for the apostolate of Catholic Action. Since one of the outstanding contributions of religious is their preaching to the clergy especially during retreats, it is to be expected that, being thus better prepared, they will be able to inculcate expertly and authoritatively together with the discharge of other priestly obligations the duty of Catholic Action—a duty that the Holy Father, as early as his first encyclical, has declared to be "among the principal responsibilities of a pastor of souls." But assuredly no less valuable will be the help given by religious (under the the most favorable conditions) in the education of youth, which is for the most part under their direction.

The August Pontiff has insistently declared on various occasions that training in the apostolic spirit (the specific function of Catholic Action) is an essential element of education in these modern times, a strong safeguard of the Christian life; that moreover it is a special grace to be called to an apostolate so closely associated with that of the priesthood. A wise educator cannot forget that; otherwise he would be limiting the horizons of good that should be opening before the generous souls of youth, he would be depriving the Church of precious auxiliaries, and he would scarcely attain all the purposes of a truly Christian education.

On the other hand, this training contributes to the improvement of the school itself. No one can deny the incalculable good that will come from the mutual good example of students, from the activity of winning over more careless students, from the effort to transform the every-day life of the school into a more active preparation for the work that the students will undertake in Catholic Action organizations during vacation or after graduation. Thus they will be found much better equipped to overcome the many grave dangers of modern social life, to which, as is well known, youth educated in a Catholic school have often been victims.

For these very weighty reasons the Holy Father has in the past recommended the establishment of *Internal Associations*, such as are



happily flourishing in a number of institutions, and also that the pious societies already under the care of religious be stimulated "to offer to Catholic Action their providential assistance: by prayer, by making known the excellence, the necessity, the advantages of Catholic Action, by exhorting and guiding their own members to it. This is especially desirable for organizations and societies that unite young people for the purpose of preserving the fruits of a Christian education." (Letter of His Eminence, Cardinal Pacelli, Secretary of State to His Holiness, addressed to Commendatore Augusto Ciriaci, President of Italian Catholic Action, March 30th, 1930).

If, then, good religious not only will endeavor to direct their own prayer to this great objective, but strive also to persuade and induce those under their spiritual care to pray for Catholic Action and enroll in it, then indeed their cooperation will be complete, and copious blessings will redound to Catholic Action and in fact to the whole Church. By conforming to these directions, religious will continue their glorious tradition of a generous readiness to respond to the needs of souls and to the wishes of the Vicar of Christ at a time so hazardous for youth, beset as it is by many enemies, especially that of Communist propaganda. It will be an act of unexcelled charity to collaborate in complete solidarity with the secular clergy for the spread of the Kingdom of Christ, which is the constant aspiration of the August Pontiff.

With the certainty that this rich promise of good will become a consoling reality, the Holy Father imparts to all superiors and members of this religious community the Apostolic Blessing as an expression of his gratitude and as a pledge of heavenly graces.

Meanwhile, on my part, I add my best wishes for the happy outcome of this desired collaboration in such a holy work, taking this occasion to express my sentiments of special regard.

March 15th, 1936.

Most devotedly in the Lord,  
E. Card. Pacelli.

## The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Leo A. Coressel, S.J.

**WE** RELIGIOUS are hardly as ill-instructed as were certain Ephesians of St. Paul's day. When asked by the Apostle if they had received the Holy Spirit, they answered: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost" (Acts of the Apostles 19:2). But it is to be feared that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not realized and appreciated as it ought to be. This is one of the most inspiring truths of our faith. Yet we lose sight of it in our busy and active lives. Our awareness of it almost reaches the vanishing point so that in actual practice, if not in knowledge, we are not too far from the ignorance displayed by the men of Athens: "But Paul standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious. For passing by, and seeing your idols, I found an altar also, on which was written: To the unknown God. What therefore you worship, without knowing it, I preach to you." (Acts of the Apostles 17:22-24.)

Is the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, in our very souls, an Unknown God? This article proposes to set down a few fundamental considerations on this sublime truth. It hopes to bring into clearer focus a truth that can be a help to our recollection, an encouragement to our work, a consolation in time of need.

The Holy Spirit does actually dwell in the souls of those who are in the state of grace. Of this there can be no doubt. The revealed word of God is too plentiful and too forceful to call this truth into question. To quote only a

few striking passages from Sacred Scripture: "Or know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God; and you are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19). And again: "Know you not, that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16).

We have just heard that the Holy Spirit is not merely in us, but that He *dwells* in us. The reason of this is that dwelling in a place is quite distinct from being there. He who dwells in a house is said to have his treasure there, a fact that is not at all true of one who merely is in a house. The treasure of the Holy Spirit is the gifts of grace, which He has lavished on us in preparing a worthy habitation for Himself. By His gifts of grace, He expelled the darkness of sin and regenerated us unto God so that we share the divine nature, are adopted sons and heirs of eternal life, His friends, and brethren of the Incarnate Word.

We are also said to be *temples* of the Holy Spirit. This is so because he in whom the Holy Spirit dwells is holy and consecrated to the praise, glory, and service of God in the same manner as a temple is a holy place, consecrated to God and His praises. In this connection, St. Paul says: "But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you" (Romans 8:9).

We must now try to come to some understanding of the indwelling. A beginning can be made by setting down what it is *not*. The indwelling is not a mere psychological presence of God induced by a spirit of recollection and prayer. This latter is enjoyed by those who are conscious that God is present to them in their prayers and works; that He hears them and speaks to them; that He is united to them; that they, on their part, act under the influence of His presence. Such a presence of God, though excellent and praiseworthy and generally attained only after long and

arduous practice, is not the indwelling of which we are speaking. This indwelling is the actual, personal, substantial presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul.

The indwelling must also be distinguished from God's natural presence in every creature. That there is such a divine omnipresence is eloquently told us by the Psalmist: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy face? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there: if I descend into hell, thou art present. If I take wings early in the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: Even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 138:7-10.)

God is everywhere and in everything. He is present in every creature: in the mountains, in the sea, in land and air; in plants, in animals, in man, in angels. He is in sinners, in the murderer, and in the thief. He is in the pagan. "In Him we live and move and are," as St. Paul told the Athenians (Acts of the Apostles 17:28). This is a natural presence of God which is proper to Him by reason of His attribute of immensity.

As distinguished from this natural presence, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a *supernatural* presence. It is had only in the souls of the just. It is a presence in a *new way*.

If we now explore this "presence in a new way," new vistas of thought will unfold themselves that will amply repay our efforts. The task is not too difficult. It can be reduced to a search for an answer to a single question: How is the new way different from and superior to God's natural presence? In venturing on this study, we can take no safer guide than the encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII on the Holy Spirit. From this document much enlightenment and solid doctrine can be drawn.

After speaking of God's natural presence in all things,

the Pope proceeds to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We quote the very words of the encyclical letter: "Moreover God by grace resides in the just soul as in a temple, in a most intimate and peculiar manner. From this proceeds that union of affection by which the soul adheres most closely to God, more so than the friend is united to his most loving and beloved friend, and enjoys God in all fulness and sweetness."

From these words it is clear that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit means an intimate and special presence. The Holy Spirit and man are united more closely than friend with most cherished friend. Now such a presence is entirely different in manner from the natural presence of God. In this latter presence God and man are as two strangers seated side by side in a trolley-bus. There is mutual presence but nothing more. There is no friendship linking the two together.

But, you will ask, how can there be friendship between God and man? Does not true friendship with another imply a certain equality with him? Man is a creature; God is his supreme Lord and Master. Man is finite and sinful; God is infinite and all-holy. Certainly there is not the slightest vestige of equality between God and man in the order of nature. Hence there is no friendship with God in His natural presence. But by sanctifying grace man is raised to a certain share of divine nature. In this share there are sufficient grounds for establishing friendship between God and man. It is for this reason that the Holy Spirit and man can be as friend with friend.

Thus far the encyclical has told us of an indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is very different from God's natural presence. It now introduces us to a consideration that will require our closest attention. It says in part that the wonderful union of man with the Holy Spirit differs "only in

degree or state from that with which God beatifies the saints in heaven." To grasp this seemingly bold statement, we must understand that the gifts of grace of this life are already the beginnings and the first-fruits of the glory to come. We have this from Sacred Scripture itself. In St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, it is stated that the Holy Spirit "is the pledge of our inheritance, unto the redemption of acquisition, unto the praise of his glory" (1:14). The word "pledge" should not be taken in the sense in which it is used in community or Catholic drives for money. In the latter case it signifies a signed statement certifying the promise of financial assistance within a certain length of time. Nor does the word mean an ordinary I O U, which is returned when cash payment is made. Rather it is to be understood as a sum of money which is a first installment, an earnest of full payment to be made at some future time. Now the Holy Spirit, who is given in this life, is not a pledge to be exchanged for something else. He is the earnest, the first installment, already given in anticipation of the final and complete blessedness that has been promised and prepared for us.

A cognate idea is contained in the Epistle to the Romans: "And not only it [irrational nature], but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves" (8:23). In his classic work on grace, Fr. Lange comments on these words of St. Paul as follows: First-fruits in general are the first produce of a field which is offered to God so that the entire crop may be consecrated to Him. As used by the Apostle of the Gentiles, first-fruits are to be understood either as the first-fruits of the gifts of the Spirit given in this life, the remainder of which are to be given in the next, or as the first-fruits which is the Holy Spirit Himself, who is now given to us as an earnest of the fulness of what is to come. In either case some

beginning is signified which already contains and represents that which follows.

This summary study of two scriptural citations should throw into clearer light the words of the encyclical already observed. There, it will be recalled, the Holy Father stated that the wonderful union of man with the Holy Spirit differs only in degree or state from that with which God beatifies the saints in heaven. That is to say: the same God is possessed and enjoyed both by the blessed in heaven and by us wayfarers on earth. But this possession and enjoyment is had by each in a different degree. By the blessed in heaven it is had in the beatific vision; by the just on earth, through faith and the love of friendship. Although this difference separates heaven from earth, it will not seem too great if we bear in mind that the love of friendship by which we are united to God on earth is the very same kind as that enjoyed by the blessed in heaven. Of course, it will be increased immeasurably in heaven, where the limitations of faith no longer act as a drag on the fervor of love. Yet withal, the love of vision and of faith are essentially the same. The difference is not one of kind but of intensity.

Such in brief are a few fundamental considerations on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He is not merely present to the just soul. He actually dwells therein as in a temple. He and man are not as strangers, but united by the bonds of friendship. By reason of the indwelling, man already possesses the beginnings of the final and complete blessedness that God has prepared for those who remain faithful to Him until the end. These elements of the indwelling are the minimum essentials, as it were, common to all who are in the state of grace, and without which there is no indwelling. To what extent additional elements enter into the indwelling, is a matter on which theologians are not in agreement. But there can be no doubt that the union of



the soul with the Holy Spirit is intensified according to the measure of spiritual progress.

It remains for us now to indicate the activity of the Holy Spirit in our souls and our own response to it. In doing so we shall make abundant use of the stirring thoughts proposed in the encyclical letter.

The Holy Spirit is supremely active in the soul in which He dwells. This will not be surprising in view of His personal character as Subsistent Love. Now love, if it is true love, is active. It expresses itself in giving. For this reason a great outpouring of divine gifts is a consequence of the indwelling. "Among these gifts are those secret warnings and invitations, which from time to time are excited in our minds and hearts by the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. Without these there is no beginning of a good life, no progress, no arriving at eternal salvation." These words should be tremendously significant to us. If we wish to make progress in our spiritual lives, if we wish to attain eternal life itself, we stand in need of the good offices of our Divine Guest.

Not only does the Holy Spirit invite and inspire us to good, He also endows us with gifts which are in a special way attributed to Him and are called the *gifts* of the Holy Spirit. These gifts strengthen the soul so that it is able to obey the divine voice and impulse more easily and promptly. They are so excellent that they can lead men to the highest sanctity. They encourage us to seek after and attain the evangelical Beatitudes. Christ calls those blessed who practise virtue in the more excellent way of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek . . . . Blessed are they that mourn . . . ." (Matthew 5:3-10.) They who live the Beatitudes have attained the heights of spiritual activity, which not only indicates giant strides towards eternal

beatitude, but which also is, even in this life, a foretaste of the same. Lastly, under the influence of the gifts, we can attain the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Twelve such are enumerated by St. Paul: "But the fruit of the Spirit is, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity" (Galatians 5:22-23). The fruits are those acts of virtue which fill the soul with joy by reason of the relish and perfection with which they are performed.

Truly, the Holy Spirit pours out lavishly of His graces and gifts. His is a divine activity surpassed only by Himself as the first Gift to us. In view of all this, our personal response cannot fall short of very great love of Him, of fervent prayer to and confident invocation of Him. We should love Him because He is God. We should love Him "because He is the substantial, eternal, primal Love, and nothing is more lovable than love." This love will, in turn, incite us to acquire a fuller knowledge of the Holy Spirit. For, as St. Thomas says, the lover is not content with a superficial knowledge of the beloved, but strives to inquire intimately into all that pertains to the beloved and thus to penetrate into the interior; as is said of the Holy Spirit, who is the Love of God, that He searches even the profound things of God.<sup>1</sup>

We should pray to and invoke the Holy Spirit. We stand in need of light to supply our deficiencies of heavenly wisdom. Our strength too frequently is overcome by weakness. Consolations are needed to buoy us up in time of trouble. We must strive for holiness, yet we are ever prone to sin. In the Holy Spirit we can find an ever-flowing fount of light, strength, consolation, and holiness, for He is the pledge of our inheritance. He is our divine, indwelling Guest. He is God.

<sup>1</sup>*Summa Theologica* 1-II, q. 28, a. 2.

## We Died with Christ

Cyril Vollert, S.J.

**E**VERY Catholic knows that Jesus Christ died on the cross to redeem mankind.

The fact itself is incontestable: the Son of God, made man, actually did offer His life for our salvation. By His death He freed us from the tyranny of sin, restored us to the state of God's children, and made eternal happiness accessible to us.

But how are we to account for this fact? A real difficulty challenges us. For, after all, He who died was not the sinner. *How* could His suffering, even though He is the Son of God, be profitable for us? What is the connection between *His* death and *our* deliverance from sin?

No one need be embarrassed if he finds himself unable to supply an altogether satisfactory answer to this question. "Surely," remarks the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, "nothing is so far beyond the reach of human reason as the mystery of the cross." After centuries of speculation, theology has not yet succeeded in formulating an explanation of the redemption with such clarity as to be acceptable to all theologians.

Many theories have been proposed. But examination and study show that if any of them is pushed too far or is advocated with narrow partisanship to the exclusion of other points of view, it will eventually lead to untenable positions or at least will neglect some aspect of revealed truth.

Very ancient is the *ransom* theory, according to which Christ has purchased us or bought us back. Obviously, there is question here of a metaphor, but a metaphor which is thoroughly scriptural. The Son of man came "to give

His life a redemption [*ransom*] for many" (Mt. 20:28). St. Paul repeats several times: "You are bought with a great price" (I Cor. 6:20). The price in question is the blood of the Savior, as St. Peter states with emphasis: "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as gold or silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (I Pet. 1:18 f.). Similar texts conveying the notion that the Son of God has acquired or purchased us are not rare.

The sacred writers refrain from urging the metaphor too far. The figure is useful for expressing the great truth that Christ has redeemed us in the general sense that He has wrought our salvation. There is no actual transfer of a price in the literal sense of the word. Price, in this context, can signify only some burdensome task which the Savior has undertaken. The ransom theory does not advance us very far in our endeavor to perceive *how* the death of Christ has brought about the remission of our sins and our restoration to God's favor.

An explanation that has appealed to some Catholic theologians, and is very popular among Protestant scholars, is the theory of *penal substitution*, according to which Jesus, the innocent, underwent the punishment decreed against us, the guilty. The scriptural foundation for this view seems to be the touching prediction concerning the future Messiah: "He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Our Savior, too, said that He had come "to give His life a redemption for many." In this text the Greek preposition translated "for" means "in place of," or "instead." But elsewhere throughout the Bible whenever the statement occurs that Christ died *for* us, *for* all men, *for* sinners, and the like, the word "for" invariably signifies "in behalf of," or "for our benefit."

In any case, the theory of penal substitution, if unduly exaggerated, can easily lead to error. One person can pay a debt for another; but an innocent person cannot be punished for a criminal. Only a guilty person can be truly punished. If suffering is knowingly inflicted upon an innocent man for a crime he did not commit, it is not punishment but a gross violation of his rights.

At the very least, the notion of substitution is deficient. It does not do justice to the teaching of revelation concerning our redemption and requires correction or completion by other ideas.

A doctrine that goes far to supply the needed correction or completion is the theory of *vicarious satisfaction*. Sin, which is a turning away from God and a violation of His honor, necessarily displeases God. To rid himself of sin, the sinner must retract his evil deed, and moreover, if God chooses to insist upon justice, must offer to God a compensation which will please God at least as much as the sin displeased Him. Since the sinful race was unable to render such compensation, God in His love decreed that His own Son should become man and discharge man's obligation for him; and Christ did so willingly out of obedience to His Father and love for us. The actions by which Christ redeemed us proceeded, indeed, from His human nature, His human mind and will; but inasmuch as that human nature was truly His, the acts were performed by a divine Person, and so were infinitely pleasing to God and abundantly compensated for all sin. In this case He who offered satisfaction is not the one who committed the sin; hence the satisfaction is vicarious.

However, the critics of this doctrine point out that in the last analysis atonement for an offense can be made only by the offender in person, or by someone who is so intimately connected with the offender as to form one moral

person with him. Some improvement in the theory of vicarious satisfaction is still possible; and many modern theologians believe they have found the key to the right understanding of the redemption in what they call the *principle of solidarity*.

For a hundred years and more solidarity, as an idea and a word, has done heavy duty in the fields of economics, sociology, and moral philosophy. The notion was not new to theology; but the convenience and increasing popularity of the word soon led to a new emphasis in speculations on the redemption.

It is St. Paul above all who stresses the strong solidarity between Christ and ourselves. He goes so far as to affirm: "Him, who knew no sin, He [God] hath made sin for us, that we might be made the justice of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:21). Sin, of course, is not transferred from us to Christ. Our Lord is neither sin nor sinner; the very notion is abhorrent. But He became a member of our race and shared in our lot. Our sin embraces Him as our head and the representative before God of our human nature. In the same way the justice of God is not transferred from Christ to us, literally, but is extended to us because of our union with Him. The underlying idea is not the substitution of one person for another, but solidarity between persons and their actions.

Therefore the Apostle could say in the same chapter: "If one died for all, *then all died*."<sup>1</sup> The death of Christ becomes our death. We are associated with Christ in His death because we are one with Him at the instant He dies for us. Here again the idea is not the substitution of Christ for us, but rather our solidarity with Him.

<sup>1</sup>This is the proper rendering of the Greek, not: "then all were dead," or "all became dead men," or "all had died," as various English versions put it. Cf. Ferdinand Prat, S.J., *The Theology of St. Paul*, II, 201-205. The Confraternity Version translates correctly.

Thus, in the minds of not a few modern theologians, the principle of solidarity tones down what is extreme in other theories, corrects what is faulty in them, and completes what is deficient in them.

It recognizes that each of them has elements of truth, but denies that any of them accounts for the whole truth. The ransom theory has points in its favor, for sin does make us debtors before God, and we men were unable to discharge the debt. However, He who pays the debt is one of us, and so the human race meets its obligation through its representative. The theory of penal substitution is not without foundation, for our Savior has indeed undergone suffering which He did not bring upon Himself. But something more than simple substitution is indicated, for He who expiates our sins by His death is our head, and hence we, the members, expiate in Him and through Him. The theory of satisfaction is also correct, but only if the idea of *vicarious* satisfaction is not insisted upon with narrow exclusiveness; for sin is atoned for only if the sinner has part in the atonement. We have all died with Christ because He died for us all. Manifestly, we are united with the dying Christ only in the sense that He died as our representative. But the point is that we *were* associated with Him at the moment He gave His life for us.

The theory of redemption thus outlined is undoubtedly an advance over explanations which overlook or slight our solidarity with Christ. But theologians are a hardheaded lot. They are ever in quest of a more penetrating insight into the data of revelation and are tireless in their efforts to achieve a clear statement of doctrine. Critical intellects are not content with a mere mention and application of the "principle of solidarity."<sup>2</sup> Some scholars are not sure that

<sup>2</sup>See especially E. Hocedez, S.J., "Notre solidarité en J.C. et en Adam," *Gregorianum*, XIII (1932), 373-403. What follows in the present article draws heavily on this excellent study, which is an important contribution to the theology of the redemption.



solidarity is the right word, or even that solidarity is really a principle. At all events, they desire to know what is the ultimate basis of our association with the redeeming death of Christ. A mere natural solidarity of race with the God-man is not enough; nor, it seems, can redemption be explained by appealing to a moral solidarity, understood in the sense of one person freely agreeing to offer compensation for others. Such bonds of union, even if taken together, hardly warrant St. Paul's emphatic assertion: "If One died for all, then all died."

A number of the Fathers of the Church concluded from meditations on such texts that some sort of *identification* between Christ and us must be acknowledged. St. Athanasius observes that we are saved by Christ because we are bodily one with Him. St. Irenaeus does not hesitate to affirm: "We are reconciled with God in the second Adam, because in Him we ourselves are made obedient unto death." The teaching of tradition is well summed up in the terse doctrine of St. Thomas: "Head and members constitute, as it were, one mystic person. And therefore Christ's satisfaction belongs to all the faithful, inasmuch as they are His members." The Angelic Doctor mentions the faithful explicitly; but since Christ has offered atonement for all men without exception, identification with the Savior in the work of satisfaction must likewise extend to all.

To get some idea of the nature of this identification, which is so enormously advantageous for us, we must go back to the very beginning, to God's eternal plan and decree, whereby He chose Christ to be the head and representative of the human family. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent His Son . . . that He might redeem them who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4 f.). By this appointment Christ was given an official position; He is the officially

designated mediator between God and men, the ambassador of God to us, and our representative at the throne of God.

Because of what He is, the God-man is the "Prince of the kings of the earth," the "King of kings, and Lord of lords." God has given Him royal power over all men that He may give eternal life to all (John 17:2). A king represents his subjects. He acts in the name of all, and what he does in his official capacity avails for all. The relation between the king and his people does not result from any solidarity between them; rather, solidarity flows from the relation of subordination.

More important still, Christ is the officially consecrated Priest with the commission to represent God among men and to offer the prayers and homage of mankind to God. "Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins. . . . Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was. So Christ also did not glorify Himself, that He might be made a high priest; but He that said to Him: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." (Heb. 5:1-5.)

By His position as King and His consecration as Priest, Christ is juridically identified with the human race. Therefore the official actions of Christ, the representative of mankind in His universal kingship and priesthood, are morally the actions of the entire human race.

The main factor in this identification is not a solidarity of race or sympathy, but God's appointment of Christ. Solidarity is only a preliminary condition.

Another point must be noted. Christ's function as representative of the race is not based merely on the juridical fact that God has designated Him as our head. Christ is not just a moral mediator between God and man, but a

physical mediator, for He is both God and man. This leads to a further identification between Christ and us.

Because Christ has a human nature which is His own as literally as our human nature is ours, He is truly a man, and the most perfect of men. Therefore even as man He is our model, or exemplary cause. Our duty is to grow up to Him, to become perfect men, unto the full measure of the stature of Christ (Eph. 4:13). God wishes us "to be made conformable to the image of His Son" (Rom. 8:29). Thus Christ contains all humanity as the pattern contains all the objects that are to be reproduced according to its model.

Our Lord is also the crown of all creation and the end or final cause of all men. God's purpose is "to re-establish all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10) or, more exactly, to bring all things to a head in Him, to gather all things together in subordination to Him as head. Therefore Christ is the supreme principle of unity in the world; for the end is the unifying principle of all things that are directed to the end. His right to act for men flows from His position at the summit of the race.

Such reflections on the various bonds that join us to Christ enable us to gain some insight into the great and mysterious truth announced by St. Paul: "Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). The reason for this identity is that "*you are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. 3:28).

The perfection of Christ's human nature gives rise to yet another striking consideration. His human soul, even during His mortal life, was blessed with the beatific vision so that, in seeing God face to face, His mind was filled with perfect and universal knowledge. Everything that ever was, is, or will be, was known to Him. His knowledge was never dormant, but was always active; nor did He have merely an obscure and general idea of the human race as a

whole, but knew intimately and in detail all epochs in the world's history, and all men, with all their actions, their words, their dispositions, and their very thoughts. We of the twentieth century were, and each one of us as a distinct person, vividly present to His intellect. Our wanderings from God were perceived by Him, and they truly grieved Him; He beheld our good acts, and they made Him glad; and everything we ever did or will do had its effect upon His feelings and will. In a word, all men and every moment of their lives were joined together in His mind.

His love for us corresponded to His knowledge of us. He was fully aware of the love the Father had for us in sending His Son into the world for our salvation, and He ratified this decree by an act of His human will. His love went out to all men; and "He loved them unto the end." This love was not a vague sentiment of good-will for the human race in general, but was a burning love for each one of us in particular so that each one of us can say with simple truth, as St. Paul said: "He loved me, and delivered Himself for me." Under the relentless pressure of this boundless love Christ cast His lot in with us, He made our cause His cause, He identified Himself with us, and He willed to share with us all that He possessed. These desires were His from the first moment of the Incarnation; and therefore from the first moment of the Incarnation His Father looked upon Him as inseparable from the human family. For, as St. Thomas remarks, love so joins those who love that they form, morally, but a single person.

Astonishing, when we reflect upon the matter, is the closeness of our relationship to Christ. He is King and High Priest, officially designated by God to represent us, so that His acts are accounted our acts. As exemplary cause He contains us; as final cause He is the principle of unity which gathers us up in subordination to Him. In His uni-

versal knowledge and His ardent love He embraces us all and receives us into His mind and heart, so that in His intention He identifies Himself with all of us and in His love He becomes one moral person with all of us.

The word solidarity can hardly support this tremendous weight of meaning. We must have recourse to a stronger term. For want of a better we might, perhaps, use the expression "mystical identity."

Have we at length arrived at an adequate account of our redemption by Christ? Not quite; all this is but an element of the glorious truth. Numerous and intimate as are the ties of our oneness with the God-man, the mystical identity between us and Him is no more than a condition prerequisite to the act which has achieved our salvation. Sacred Scripture, as well as the whole of tradition, ascribes our redemption to the passion and the death of Christ, to the sacrifice of the cross.

On Calvary Christ, the eternal High Priest, represented the whole of mankind. All men were distinctly present to His mind and His heart. With His knowledge and His love He identified Himself with the entire sinful race, but in a special way with penitent humanity, with all those who, down the ages, would ratify the sacrifice offered for them by their own saintly lives. The sacrificial action of the High Priest was a social action, an action performed in the name of all. Christ united all in His intention and included all in the homage He rendered to God.

One point remains. It is a point of capital importance and brings us to the apex of our identification with the redeeming Christ. In all sacrifices the victim offered represents the people and symbolizes the gift of their persons to God. The victim in the sacrifice of the cross is the unspotted, holy humanity of Jesus Christ in close union with the whole human race. "Christ died once for our

sins, the Just for the unjust, that *He might offer us to God*" (I Pet. 3:18). In offering His body to be slain, our High Priest immolated sinful mankind that was identified with Him. The homage of love and adoration and obedience He held out to God in expiation and atonement for the sins of the world was the homage of the whole human family, head and members.

This is why St. Paul could say: "If One died for all, then all died." This, finally, gives us some inkling of the mystery and enables us to understand, with our cloudy, human thoughts, how the death of the sinless Christ could redeem us sinners.

The loving oblation of the cross pleased God more than all the sins of all men could displease Him. The divine justice was placated. God was prepared to readmit man to His friendship and was eager to accept the children of men as His sons when, in the sacrament of regeneration, they would channel off the fruits of the sacrifice to themselves and become living members of His only Son.

As for ourselves, Christ in His piercingly clear and comprehensive knowledge associated all our good works, our expiations, and our sacrifices with His own great act of sacrifice. The vast Church of the faithful was gathered together in His mind from all lands and all centuries down to the end of time and was offered to God in Him, the head of the mystical body. Our own good works and atonements cannot, of course, in any way enhance the meritorious and satisfactory value of the sacrifice consummated on Calvary. For our good works are the fruits of that sacrifice, and no effect can influence its cause. But the good that we may do during our lives acquires a new value from the oblation made by Christ on the cross; for since He offered to God our persons and all our good actions, which in one way or another are the fruits of the graces He merited for

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us, these actions share in His sacrifice and take on a sacrificial character. If we so will, every moment of our lives, and above all that supreme instant of our lives which we call death, can be made immeasurably precious for eternity by the contact we maintain with the sacrificial death of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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### BOOKLET NOTICES

*San Francisco Conference and Congress.* This printed record of a radio round-table discussion describes the functions of Congress with regard to treaties and international agreements and tells of the careful work done by our State Department to secure general discussion and approval of the UNRRA and ultimate ratification of its work by the United State Senate. Fathers James L. Burke, S.J., James D. Sullivan, S.J., and Thomas F. Fleming, S.J., took part in the original discussion. Published by: Institute of Social Order, 3742 West Pine Boulevard, St. Louis 8, Missouri. Price: five cents.

*Words of Eternal Life.* Selected and compiled by Rev. A. H. Goldschmidt, P.S.M. Using Christ's words almost exclusively, the author sets before us the basic teachings of the Gospel. The booklet has values for all readers; religious could use many of the texts gathered here as subject matter for meditation. Published by: The Pallottine Fathers, 5424 W. Bluemound Road, Milwaukee 13, Wisconsin.

*Paul to the Modern.* By L. F. Cervantes, S.J. Many writers and public men have come forth with "solutions" for the world's ills. The author of this booklet, which is a reprint of a chapter from the book *That You May Live*, discusses and refutes the claims of Morgan, Stalin, Mrs. Sanger, and others and then presents St. Paul with the true solution—the doctrine of the Mystical Body put into practice. Written in a vivid, imaginative style, the pamphlet reads easily and holds the attention throughout. Published by: Guild Press, 128 E. 10th Street, St. Paul 1, Minnesota. Price: ten cents.

*To Be or Not to Be a Jew, and Jews and You.* By Rev. Arthur B. Klyber, C.S.S.R. In interesting conversational style the author discusses the existence of God, the Resurrection of Christ, and other topics in the first of these pamphlets, and in the second, such questions as, Was Jesus a Jew? Why Was Jesus crucified? Did the Jews crucify Him? Though written primarily for Jews, these pamphlets, especially the first, should have general interest. They may be obtained from the author at 1118 North Grand Avenue, (Rock Church), St. Louis 6, Missouri. Price: ten cents each.

The drive for candidates for the religious life is the inspiration for *The Call of Charity*, by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Xavier, Kansas, and *Introducing the Blessed Sacrament Fathers*, by The Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament, 184 East 76th Street, New York 21, New York. Both of these booklets make effective use of photographs to bring home the story of the life and activities of the respective congregations. They should prove valuable in arousing the interest of prospective candidates.



## *Book Reviews*

**WEAPONS FOR PEACE.** By Thomas P. Neill. Pp. ix + 234. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1945. \$2.50.

Amid all the glib talk and the weighty statements of our days regarding the extension of "democracy" and the working out of "democratic" government and institutions in the conquered territories, it is good to be reminded of the serious implications of such moves. True democracy, if it is to deserve the name and fulfill its promise, imposes careful thought and serious duties on every citizen; it therefore calls for training in correct thinking and principles, for consistent and well directed activity. Towards this end the book here under review may be taken as an introduction and text book.

The work consists of four unequal parts. In the first the problem of democracy is sketched, together with its relation to peace, and then the reason indicated for the state of unrest which has distinguished the last centuries. —The second part, which makes up about a third of the whole, gives a historical survey of the state of western society since the birth of the Renaissance and describes the philosophical, sociological, economic, and religious ideas which led up to our present disturbed condition. Through the Protestant revolt, the growth of the absolute states, the "Age of Revolutions," and the class struggles of the industrial revolution, we are brought down to the disillusionment and scepticism of our own days. For many readers this part will probably be the most instructive and interesting in the book. —The stage is now set for a study of various solutions of the problem of peace. First Marxism and Nazism are evaluated as systems, then the Christian teaching as authoritatively set forth in the various pronouncements of Pope Pius XII. The emphasis is placed on the return to sound principles of morality and a correct theory of the state which must guide statesmen and citizens in international and domestic concerns. —The fourth part is the shortest but touches on matters of a very practical character. What devolves upon each individual as his duty in the matter of bringing back an enduring peace is here clearly and briefly pointed out. Where this book is used as basis for study clubs or for lectures to the people, this part will probably have to be supplemented and expanded from the works given in a bibliographical note.

The source references are collected at the end of the book; also,

the bibliography for further study. An alphabetical index completes a handy and useful book on a matter which is of vital importance to all in these days.

The work was written and published before the San Francisco conference and the drawing up of the UNCIO charter. A comparison of this document with the theories of this book, particularly in the third part, should form an interesting study. The teachings of the reigning pontiff, Pius XII, are here synthesized and explained. In fact the whole book may be said to be built up on the papal teachings on the matter. While on the whole it stops short of the application of the principles to particular problems and, therefore, leaves room for such a book as MacLean's *A Dynamic World Order*, it still will serve a very useful purpose in giving readers and students a proper orientation in the pressing problem of an enduring peace based on correct principles of morality.—A. C. WAND, S.J.

**DAILY PROGRESS IN RELIGIOUS VIRTUES.** By the Rev. John Pitrus, S.T.D. Pp. 320. Distributors, Motherhouse of Immaculate Conception, Convent Heights, New Britain, Connecticut. (Second Edition), 1944. \$1.60.

The title of this book indicates the certain fruit to be attained by its assiduous and persevering use. The first sentence of the preface, "Prayer was never an easy task," warns us of a difficult undertaking ahead; it is a necessary warning in these days when the how-to-make-it-easy technique has a tendency to creep into articles, pamphlets, and books on prayer. How many religious have wasted much time seeking easy ways of prayer, only to give up after many years with the reflection, "Prayer is not for me." A resolute attitude at the outset to overcome the obstacles by following one definite system of prayer would assure success.

Here is one of many systems proposed, and an excellent one it is. In the plan of the author the book is not a meditation manual; it is intended as a companion amid the distractions of everyday life. It is certainly well calculated to aid in acquiring a deep spirit of recollection in the midst of an active apostolate. There are spiritual reflections offered for each day of the year, introduced by an appropriate text from Scripture. With this latter as a keynote, and the brief development of the thought as matter, we are well-equipped for throughout-the-day considerations in odd moments. It is just here that hard work and good will are required to maintain the necessary recollection.

The field is well covered. Persistent use of this book will bring growth in knowledge of the religious and spiritual life, that indispensable condition for progress. A glance at the index will show how many virtues, salutary practices, faults, defects, and doctrines form the subject matter. In the individual considerations matter for the intellect, will, imagination, and for the application of the senses is furnished in attractive variety.

The author tells us the "considerations run along without a strictly determined plan." While agreeing with him that "life does not go hand in hand with the most systematically-arranged manual of mental prayer," many will prefer a logically-ordered plan for progress. This seems a more certain preservative against drifting along in the spiritual life with the tide of its "unexpected and irregular happenings." However, anyone who will embrace the author's plan for daily progress wholeheartedly, can count on the special protection of the Holy Spirit from aimless wandering in the spiritual life.—P. M. REGAN, S.J.

**A RETREAT FOR RELIGIOUS.** By Reverend Andrew Green, O.S.B. Pp. iii + 191. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1945. \$2.00.

What religious will like most in this book is the proportion and clarity with which the component elements of the spiritual life are treated, and the quiet, sane manner in which the author inspires them to renew their consecration to the high ideals of their calling. The manual provides well chosen and well expressed thoughts for formal meditation and reflection, and will serve equally well for refectory reading during retreat days. Retreatants like books that are long enough for clear exposition and short enough to allow them to read slowly and meditatively and yet finish the book. *A Retreat For Religious* has both these merits.

Generous dispositions are aroused in the soul by the author's inspiring first chapter on the What? Why? and How? of a retreat. He then proceeds to his first principle and foundation, his personal consideration of the all important questions of human life, What is man? and What is God?

The following chapters concern themselves with the hindrances that rise up in man's path on his way to God. Anew we realize that the only success that matters is final union with God, and the only ruin that is absolute is separation from Him forever by unrepented mortal sin. All the motives for ridding ourselves of sin receive

## BOOK REVIEWS

attention, but principal stress here and throughout is placed on the love and gratitude we owe to God our Father. Considerations on scandal, venial sin, imperfection, and conversion follow, as the author gently urges the soul to disengage itself from all that hinders its union with its Maker.

The remainder of the book considers the positive steps in the purified soul's approach to God. Christ is taken as our Model, and from Him we learn the detachment, the obedience, the mortification, and love of prayer that will unite us to God through Him.

Throughout the author is clear and simple and, in a quiet way, inspiring. *A Retreat For Religious* will contribute greatly to make the annual retreat a success.—R. D. HUBER, S.J.

**MEDITATIONS ON ETERNITY FOR RELIGIOUS.** By the Venerable Mother Julienne Morell, O.P. Pp. xiii + 146. Frederick Pustet Company, New York, 1945. \$2.50.

"Think of thy last end and thou shalt never sin." No doubt it was with some such thought in mind that Venerable Mother Julienne wrote her *Exercices spirituels sur l'éternité* some three centuries ago. Written originally for the Dominican Sisters of the Monastery of St. Praxède in Avignon, of which Mother Morell was three times prioress, the book will be found helpful by all religious who make it the subject of serious meditation. The present translation from the second French edition is the work of the Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi Monastery, Menlo Park, California.

The twenty-nine meditations in the main part of the book are intended as subject matter for the annual retreat. They are divided into three groups or series. The first brings God (the Eternity of Love) and His benefits before the mind of the retreatant. Here we meet with such familiar themes as creation and redemption, the passion of Christ, the benefits of the religious vocation, and (in sharp contrast) meditations on the ingratitude of the religious soul and on sin. In the second group the retreatant considers the two eternities (heaven and hell) towards which we advance, together with the various ways of reaching a blessed eternity, namely prayer and the practice of the virtues. Finally, in the third group we consider some of the helps given us to reach a blessed eternity, such as the Blessed Sacrament, Our Blessed Lady, and the saints. The retreat ends fittingly with a meditation of thanksgiving. To the retreat proper, six meditations have been added for use during preparation for reli-

(Continued on next page)

## Communications

Reverend Fathers:

After reading the communication from "A Diocesan Priest" in the July issue of REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS I still think the "Religious Priest" is correct.

The "Religious Priest" must have been amazed at all the conclusions the "Diocesan Priest" drew from his remarks and placed into his mouth! The "Diocesan Priest" asks a lot of questions, and answers them for the "Religious Priest" as if there were no other answer possible! It appears as though the "Diocesan Priest" failed to grasp the spirit of the letter as he proceeded to hack away at one word after the other in the "Religious Priest's" communication. I am quite sure the "Religious Priest," in his charity, tried to tell the nun that the formalism in her community was defective and could be cured without destroying all formalism.

The "Religious Priest" did not say that any community rule was more important than charity towards the laity. He did say that there is a proper time and place for everything. Even Christ, when talking to Martha and Mary, said, "Only one thing is necessary." At other times Christ told his apostles to "come apart awhile . . . and pray . . . and rest." Charity is a virtue and in practicing charity we must avoid extremes. Furthermore charity begins at home, and religious must save their own souls (the primary aim for which they entered religious life), then try to save others.

The nun in her communication quotes an isolated case. She states

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gious profession.

Most of the subject matter is abstract rather than concrete and is but briefly indicated leaving the full development and practical applications to be worked out in the actual meditation. Consequently, beginners in mental prayer may find the book somewhat difficult, but it should prove helpful to those who have attained some proficiency. Many of the Scripture accommodations will seem forced to modern readers, perhaps will annoy some; but nevertheless one who seeks may find in this book much solid food for thought.

—A. F. SCHNEIDER, S.J.

that the visitor said "the matter was *very* urgent," and he was told he could not see the Sister. The case sounds fantastic! However, if the case is true, the porter is at fault; and the "Religious Priest" offered suggestions for correcting the formalism which, as proved by the example, was defective in this individual community. The porter, under the circumstances, should have considered the urgency. Why destroy all formalism because of this far-fetched case? The deficiency should be remedied. If a person's tooth is aching you try to remedy the situation by giving attention to the tooth, not by cutting the person's head off!

There might be too much of the wrong kind of formalism in religious communities but the right kind of formalism will never promote anti-clericalism. If we do the right thing at the right time we can be pretty sure that God will see to it that everything turns out all right. The nun told us that the boy's body was found in the river four days later; she didn't mention the boy's soul. Perhaps God rewarded the nun's formalism by bringing the boy's soul to heaven; God still does things like that,—even in the twentieth century! —J.P.R.

#### Reverend Fathers:

The writer of the communication against formalism in your July 15 issue apparently missed the whole point of my communication in the May issue.

My communication was written for religious and not for parish priests, whose vocation it is to be at the beck and call of their parishioners twenty-four hours a day. If the parish priest does his job well, the parishioners will not be importuning religious who have other duties to perform. Each religious is assigned duties through obedience. If religious allow themselves to be importuned by parishioners who should go to their parish priest, then the religious are either over-burdening themselves or are shifting their assigned work to someone else. St. John Berchmans was canonized for this careful observance of the rules and orders of his superiors. And no one will question his charity.

The canon law for religious and papal-approved rules of the various religious congregations demand that religious lead the common life. These rules provide for parish priests and "out" Sisters who take care of the charitable works of the community, but the rules

never allow the whole community to be at the beck and call of the general public.

If the writer against formalism is looking for the causes of anti-clericalism, he will never find them in communities that live disciplined lives according to their rules. The occasions for outbursts of anti-clericalism have always come when priests and religious have led undisciplined lives like the worldings all around them. Religious who live according to their rules and on a schedule will find much comfort from the life of the sainted parish priest, the Curé d'Ars, who worked a full day for his public, but on schedule; and any unreasonable and undisciplined soul who tried to break his schedule with selfish demands was promptly rebuked and put in his place. Even the woman who told the saint that she didn't wait for the pope himself, got the answer, "I am sorry. But you will have to wait for the Curé d'Ars."

"Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good." If one does just that, he will not fail in his performance of duties. He will know that to do the work assigned him is *good performance* in the eyes of his superior and in the eyes of his Master. If formalism is an aid to this end, then formalism must be good. —Religious Priest.

Reverend Fathers:

Does it not seem a pity that space in such a journal as yours is appropriated to such an aspect of the religious life as is presented under the title of "Formalism"? I mean that all the views expressed are too extreme to be worth while. First, the Sister who wrote *re* leaving the chapel and the consequent (??) suicide would have done better to keep silent about the whole matter. The "Religious Priest" was not tactful in his view of it, either; for we religious are at times "on call" twenty-four hours a day—but always in accordance with rule. For example, a hospital superintendent is, to a certain extent, "on call" twenty-four hours; that is, her phone is always accessible to the night staff, and she is frequently called.

The "Diocesan Priest," in his communication, forgets that he is speaking of a community of religious women. In any convent there is absolutely far more charity, even philanthropy, than formalism. No professed nun—or novice, for that matter—can really further the work of God's Church by setting aside her rule, except in rare and unusual cases. And even in these cases the spirit of the rule is maintained. —A Hospital Sister.



## Questions and Answers

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When a professed Sister of a congregation leaves to go to a cloistered community, has the congregation any obligation to take her back after she takes perpetual vows in the cloistered community in case she becomes dissatisfied or ill? Is the congregation responsible for paying the dowry to the cloistered community if the Sister brought none, or an insufficient one, on her entrance to the congregation?

A Sister who, with the permission of the Holy See, transfers from her congregation to another order or congregation must make a new novitiate in the institute to which she has transferred. During the time of the novitiate she remains a member of the congregation from which she transferred, but her duties and obligations as a member of that congregation are suspended, and she is bound by the duties and obligations of the institute to which she transferred. She is bound by her vow of obedience to obey the superiors and the mistress of novices of the new institute (c. 633). On the day on which the Sister makes her profession in the new institute, she ceases to be a member of the congregation to which she formerly belonged, and that congregation has no further obligations towards her. In fact, it could not take her back without a special indult from the Holy See.

Regarding the dowry, the first congregation retains the capital during the time of the novitiate in the new institute, but the income on the capital must be given to the new institute for the support of the Sister during her novitiate. When the Sister makes her profession in the new institute, the capital of the dowry must be turned over to the new institute. If the Sister brought no dowry to the first institute, or one that is insufficient, the first congregation has no obligation in justice to supply the dowry or what is lacking. The Sister must do this from her own personal property if she has any. If she has none, the first congregation might supply it as an act of charity but is under no obligation to do so.

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In the quinquennial report to the Holy See to be made by the superior general, question No. 58 asks: "How much of the favorable balance of each house has been turned in to the common treasury at the end of each year?" Who has the authority to determine what this amount should be

for the individual houses? Again, question No. 59 asks whether all have willingly contributed their share. Would a local superior have any justification for complaint if all or most of the surplus earnings are requested by the motherhouse?

In the *Normæ* which the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars drew up (June 28, 1901) as a model for the constitutions of religious women, art. 294 prescribed that at the end of each year, after all bills had been paid and all obligations liquidated, each house should send in to the motherhouse (or to the provincial house) one-third of the net balance on hand. This became the standard for all constitutions approved by the S. Congregation up to the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law. The Code did not repeat this legislation of the *Normæ* but contented itself with the statement that "not only every institute, but every province and every house is capable of acquiring and possessing temporal goods with fixed or founded revenue, unless its capacity has been excluded or limited by the rules and constitutions" (c. 531). Since the Code, the Sacred Congregation of Religious inserts into constitutions submitted to it for approval an article which states that each house shall contribute from its net income that amount which has been determined by the general chapter. This gives the general chapter the power to change the amount according to times and circumstances.

Furthermore, in order to give financial assistance to smaller houses which cannot support themselves (much less contribute to the general fund), the chapter may give the superior general and her council the power to put an additional tax on the wealthier houses over and above that prescribed for all. It is understood, of course, that wealthier houses may contribute a greater amount than that required, provided the superior does so willingly and with the consent of her council.

In congregations whose constitutions limit or take away entirely the right of the individual houses to possess goods in their own name, the constitutions must be followed, and they should prescribe in detail what amount, if any, may be retained by a local house at the end of the year. The general chapter has no power to change the constitutions, but it may make ordinances regarding temporalities provided such ordinances are in conformity with the constitutions, or at least not contrary to them.

No local superior can reasonably complain against the provisions of the constitutions in this matter. Where the constitutions are silent

and the general chapter has fixed the amount which each individual house must contribute annually, the superior may make her difficulties known to the superior general and her council. It would also be quite proper to propose such difficulties at the next general chapter in order to obtain relief from an embarrassing situation.

To answer the questions proposed: No. 58 of the quinquennial report asks what amount each house is required to turn in to the superior general annually for the support of the motherhouse, the novitiate, Sisters in studies, and the like. It wishes to know also whether this amount is prescribed by the constitutions or by the general chapter. No. 59 wishes to know whether there have been any complaints—whether this amount is too great for some houses. According to the answers given in the report, the S. Congregation will propose a remedy if one be needed.

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Does canon law permit divided authority in a religious institution? Could a local superior be appointed merely to supervise and direct discipline and the religious life while another religious, such as a school principal or a hospital superintendent, controls and directs the educational, business, and financial affairs of the institution without being under the control of the local superior?

The various canons of the Code imply that there is only *one* superior for each religious community. That superior exercises authority over the community within the limits of his office (c. 502). Other officers, such as councillors and bursars, are required by the Code (c. 516), but they are to exercise their authority under the direction and supervision of the local superior. However, it is evident that the superior of a religious community may know less about modern educational or hospital standards than the dean of a college or the supervisor of a hospital who has specialized in these subjects and has had years of experience. Again a certain policy in education or hospital work may have been developed in a religious institution, the fruit of long years of labor and experience. A new superior will prudently allow the dean, principal, or superintendent to continue such a long established policy. This does not mean that the principal or superintendent is to act independently of the superior, but rather that he will keep the superior informed of what is going on and will refer all matters of greater moment to him for final approval. Thus the superior will be governing the school or hospital through the principal or

superintendent, according to the fundamental principle of law, *Qui facit per alium facit per se* (One who authorizes another to act thereby acts himself).

Another problem which arises in connection with the frequent change of local superiors is the question of retaining contact with the alumni of a school or hospital, as well as with friends and benefactors. A principal or superintendent may be the connecting link. It would ordinarily be wise for a new superior to allow such contact on the part of the principal or superintendent to continue. He might content himself with meeting the alumni and friends of the institution when occasion offers—at commencements, reunions, retreats, and so forth—leaving the more personal contacts to the principal or superintendent, or to some older religious who is well known and who will continue to foster these contacts after the superior has completed his term of office and been transferred elsewhere. In this case also the superior would really be acting, but through another.

Some of our large institutions have evolved a system by which the institution has a president, who represents the institution before the public and remains in office indefinitely, and a rector, who is the religious superior and who is subject to the laws of the Church regarding his term of office. This state of affairs seems to be implicitly approved by an answer of the Code Commission, given June 3, 1918, declaring that directors of schools, hospitals, and other religious houses devoted to pious works are not subject to canon 505 regarding a fixed term of office, unless they are, at the same time, superiors having religious under their authority also as regards religious discipline.

The exigences of modern conditions may best be met, therefore, by having subordinate officials (for example, the principal or superintendent) realize that they are not the superior of the institution, but are merely directing it in the name of the superior. They will keep the latter informed of what is going on and refer all matters of importance to him for final approval. On his part the superior will allow these officials to run the institution, sustain contacts with friends and alumni, and so forth, will show himself interested in all phases of their work, and will help them to continue and even to improve a well established policy for the institution. Should a difference of opinion arise, after sensible discussion and consideration of reasons for both sides of the question, the will of the superior must ultimately prevail.

Our constitutions state that "Sisters may send letters uninspected to the superior of the house when she is absent." Does this mean that the Sisters who are stationed at the motherhouse for the summer are entitled to use this privilege?

The prescription of the constitutions quoted in this question is taken from canon 611 of the Code of Canon Law. It allows members of a local community to send letters uninspected to the local superior of their own community when that superior is absent from the house. It likewise allows the absent local superior to send letters uninspected to the members of her community who are at home. Even though the local superior has gone to the motherhouse on business or to make a retreat, she has a right to receive letters from the members of her community and to send letters to them uninspected.

It may be well to state that this particular provision of canon 611 is new in the Code; it was not contained in the *Normæ* of 1901. The commentators who have written on this canon have little or no information to give by way of interpretation. It seems likely that this provision was put into canon 611 to prevent the person taking the absent superior's place for the time being from reading any correspondence which might pass between the members of the community and their absent superior.

In answer to our question, therefore, we must say that if this provision of the law is taken literally, it does not give the Sisters who are absent from their community the right to send letters uninspected to their local superior who is at home. If some Sisters go to the motherhouse to take courses during the summer, they are not entitled by the provisions of the Code to correspond with their local superior without subjecting such correspondence to the supervision of the local superior of the motherhouse. Some constitutions grant this special right to subjects for all correspondence with their local superior under all circumstances, but such a right is not strictly speaking contained in the general law of the Church. Nevertheless we believe that the local superior of the motherhouse should graciously grant this privilege to her summer guests, since they are still subjects of their own local superior. Such a course of action would tend to support and confirm the confidence which should exist between all superiors and subjects and which higher superiors surely look for when they appoint local superiors.

## St. Joseph's Jubilee

Francis L. Filas, S.J.

**O**N DECEMBER 8, seventy-five years ago, Pope Pius IX, acceding to the wishes of hundreds of bishops and thousands of priests and faithful, declared St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church. This action on the part of the Holy Father marked the end of the era of St. Joseph's obscurity and ushered in a period when the humble, lovable foster-father of Jesus was honored to an extent far beyond the most optimistic hopes of the early proponents of his devotion. The present sketch purposes to relate how and why St. Joseph obtained his outstanding position in the devotional life of the Church.

Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical, *Quamquam Pluries*, succinctly set forth the basis for Joseph's patronage. The Holy Family which Joseph governed as with paternal authority, so he wrote, contained the beginnings of the new Church. Here was Mary, the Mother of God, who was to become the mother of all Christians when she bore them on Calvary amid the sufferings of her Redeemer Son. At that same time Jesus became the firstborn of Christians, His brothers by adoption and redemption. Consequently Joseph, the "watchful defender of Christ" and "chaste guardian of the Virgin," cherishes with singular affection the multitudes who make up the Church of his foster Son. Over this multitude "he rules with a sort of paternal authority, because he is the husband of Mary and the father of Jesus Christ. Thus, it is conformable to reason and in every way becoming to blessed Joseph that as once it was his sacred trust to guard with watchful care the family of Nazareth, no matter what befell, so now, by virtue of his

heavenly patronage, he is in turn to protect and defend the Church of Christ."

This concept of Joseph's patronage lay hidden and unnoticed for centuries. Probably the first to propose it was John Gerson, the chancellor of the University of Paris, who described it in a sermon to the members of the Council of Constance on September 8, 1416. Gerson's sermon had for its purpose the adoption of a feast of the espousals of Joseph and Mary. With deep anxiety the chancellor noted the disastrous results of the great Western Schism of 1378, a wound which was still unhealed. He asked for approval of the feast of the espousals "in order that through the merits of Mary and through the intercession of so great, so powerful and in a certain way so omnipotent an intercessor with his bride . . . the Church might be led to her only true and safe lord, the supreme pastor, her spouse in place of Christ."

The suggestion made by Gerson was not acted upon, but once it had been put forth, the idea continued to recur to friends of St. Joseph. What really began to receive marked emphasis was Joseph's part as guardian of the Holy Family. The full understanding of this role contained the idea of Joseph's further guardianship of the Church.

It was next elaborated in the *Summa of the Gifts of St. Joseph*, a pioneering book written by the Dominican Isidor de Isolani in 1522. His work gathered the various materials that had already been published about St. Joseph and told of the Saint's life, virtues, blessings, and glory in Heaven. Isolani also drew a glowing picture of Joseph's future glory on earth. While depicting the exceptional honors he felt sure would be granted his Saint, he had this to say: "For the honor of His name God has chosen St. Joseph as head and special patron of the kingdom of the Church Militant."



The theme of St. Joseph's guidance of the Holy Family and the Church continued to run through the devotion as it flourished up to the middle of the 18th century. Here, in common with the fortunes of the Church, it suffered a relapse; but with the reign of Pius IX, a hundred years later, it again surged forward. During the 1860's various petitions from bishops, priests, and the faithful were sent to the Holy See, asking for St. Joseph's full glorification in the liturgy and for the declaration of his patronage of the Universal Church. Three special petitions were presented to the Vatican Council in 1869-70. It seems that these three were the petitions that moved Pius IX to make his declaration on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1870.

Gerson's purpose was achieved; St. Joseph was officially proclaimed Patron of the Universal Church—and how sorely the Church needed that help! Pius had already been stripped of his temporal holdings. In a score of countries rampant anticlericalism was riding apparently unchecked against a Church which the infallible savants of that "progressive" era declared dying if not already dead. The strength of the papacy had been completely broken, so they said; the prestige of the prisoner of the Vatican was shorn from him and his successors for all time. But as usual with enemies of the Church, they forgot Christ's promise to be with His Church forever. They forgot the power of its mother, of her who was conceived without sin—in fact they merely laughed at and disregarded the "out-dated" dogma about her which the Pope had expounded. Probably they did not even know of the Holy Father's action regarding St. Joseph on that momentous Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1870.

Now, seventy-five years later, what is the prestige of the Church St. Joseph protects? Or what is the power of

the Pope, so intangible, yet so compelling, that kept the Nazi invaders from setting foot on the territory of Vatican City? The world press invariably seeks the reaction of the Holy Father on every moral issue that arises. The Church is daily recognized as a stable force, if not the *only* stable force, in a world going somewhere towards progress or destruction with awesome rapidity. It is hard to dismiss this resurgence of the Church since 1870 as mere chance. St. Joseph's patronage has shown its effects.

Nor has the Church been ungrateful to its protector. In the last seventy-five years the popes have lavishly showered liturgical honors on St. Joseph. He alone of all saints except our Blessed Lady has been given two feasts of exceptional rank, a special preface in the Mass, a litany in his honor, separate invocation in the prayers for the dying, and particular mention in the Divine Praises. Now, as the Church is facing a continued crisis in its own and in the world's history, Joseph is again the standard-bearer, spear-heading the campaign against atheistic communism, the threat of our times. His name is ever linked with those of Jesus and Mary. In all these tributes the mind of the Church can be discerned implicitly: St. Joseph is worthy of special veneration, second only to Mary and above the veneration granted any other angel or saint.

As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of his patronage of the Universal Church, we should humbly thank Almighty God for having given St. Joseph to us, and thank, too, our protector for his services to the Church just as Mary and Jesus thanked him for all he did at Bethlehem, in Egypt, and at Nazareth.

## The New Latin Psalter

Michael J. Gruenthaner, S.J.

**T**HAT the Psalms are endowed with unusual poetic beauty and spiritual power is conceded by all, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. They reveal to us the glorious attributes of the divinity; they speak to us of the sufferings and the triumph of the Messiah; they recount to us the events and lessons of Israel's history; they instruct us in the ways of true wisdom. Their chief attraction, however, lies in the fact that so many of them depict to us the anguish of the human heart struggling with almost every imaginable phase of adversity and rising to heights of heroism by unshaken confidence in God and persevering prayer.

Each Psalm, therefore, is a gem of religious thought. Its power to enlighten the mind and warm the heart springs not only from the wisdom and artistry of its human author but principally from the Holy Spirit, who inspired its production. Need we wonder, then, that the Psalms formed the favorite private prayer of the devout Jew in the Old Testament and that not a few of them were sung in the Temple to enrich and spiritualize the sacrificial ritual? Under the circumstances, it seems but natural that the Psalms should be repeatedly quoted by Christ and the Apostles and that the Church should prize them as a precious heritage from the Old Dispensation. So highly did she esteem them that she allotted them a commanding position in her liturgy.

Full enjoyment of the spiritual treasures contained within the Psalms has, however, been barred to many. The reason is that the early Church received the Psalter in an unskillful translation from the Greek, which in its turn

was an imperfect rendering of the original Hebrew. St. Jerome, to whom the Church owes so much for his labors in behalf of the Scriptures, ameliorated the situation slightly by revising the Old Latin version extant in his day in accordance with better Greek manuscripts. His first emendation of the Psalter appeared in Rome about 383 and was adopted by the churches of the Eternal City; for this reason it is known as the Roman Psalter. In 386, while residing in Palestine, he published a second and more extensive revision of the Psalter based, like the former, exclusively on the Greek or Septuagint version. Because it first gained great popularity in Gaul, it is called the Gallican Psalter. Ultimately, it became the version current in the Latin Church and was incorporated in the Vulgate as the official translation of that Church. To facilitate religious discussion between Jews and Christians, St. Jerome also translated the Psalms directly from the Hebrew, but this so-called Hebrew Psalter never captivated the ordinary clergy and the laity; it remained restricted in use to scholars.

### *History of the New Version*

The Gallican Psalter, therefore, found in the Vulgate and the Roman Breviary, retains some of the defects of the Old Latin together with all the weaknesses of the Septuagint, its archetype. These deficiencies became ever more apparent with the progress of biblical studies in modern times. It was noted that the meaning of the Psalms had been obscured not infrequently and that much of their artistic merit had evaporated in the course of the double translation to which they had been subjected. To bring out the full significance and poetic beauty of the Psalms, Catholic scholars in various countries began to publish translations of the Hebrew text in the vernacular. These proved to be so conducive to a fuller understanding and

keener appreciation of these inspired poems that a movement arose among priests and religious to have a Latin version of the Psalter more consonant with the original than the official Vulgate or Gallican Psalter. This desire became so widespread that our reigning Pontiff, Pius XII, commissioned the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome to prepare a new version of the Psalter in harmony with all the most approved methods of textual criticism.

The task of preparing this translation was confided to six professors, each of whom was a specialist in one or more of the branches of biblical science bearing on the subject. Begun in January, 1941, the project was completed after three and a half years of intense labor. The Holy Father found the manuscript of the new version so satisfactory that he commanded it to be printed. In accordance with this command two books were published by the Vatican Press in 1945: a *Liber Psalmorum*, and a liturgical edition in which the Psalms of the new version are arranged according to the system followed in the breviary.

The *Liber Psalmorum* contains a new version not only of the Psalms but also of the canticles of the Old and New Testaments usually recited in the breviary. Each of them is headed by a suitable title; the text is preceded by a short analysis exhibiting the nature and interrelation of its thought. Brief footnotes have been added, explaining difficult expressions and ideas, as well as setting forth the reasons for the translation adopted. These notes supply the absolute minimum required for the comprehension of the text; they are not intended to supplant the more extensive commentaries which supply a complete exposition of all the problems presented by a particular Psalm. The book is also provided with a brief introduction dealing with the nature, origin, and history of the Psalms; essentials only are considered and controversial issues are avoided.

A notable feature of the book is the *Motu Proprio* of Pius XII, *In cotidianis precibus*, which is concerned with the new version. It recounts its history, character, and purpose, and grants permission to all those who so desire to substitute the New Psalter for the older one in the public or private recitation of the Divine Office; this permission is to be valid as soon as the liturgical edition shall have been published. The New Psalter, therefore, has the same official standing as the Vulgate version. This is, unquestionably, a momentous step; for the latter has been used exclusively in the breviary for so many centuries; it is intimately interwoven with the writings of the Fathers, as the Sovereign Pontiff notes in the *Motu Proprio*; it has been declared authentic by the Council of Trent. The motives prompting the Pope to introduce so startling an innovation are well set forth in his *Motu Proprio*:

That all may hereafter derive greater light, grace, and consolation from the recitation of the Divine Office, so that, enlightened and impelled by these, they may in these most difficult times of the Church be fitted more and more to imitate the models of sanctity shining forth so egregiously in the Psalms and that they may be moved to nourish and foster anew the sentiments of divine love, strenuous courage, and pious repentance which the Holy Spirit excites within us when reading the Psalms.

#### *Basic Text of the New Version*

An attentive scrutiny of the New Psalter shows that it fulfills the wishes of the Holy Father. First of all, it is based upon a corrected Hebrew text; in this respect it surpasses any of the ancient versions. The text found in our present Hebrew Bibles cannot be accepted without reserve. It is not derived immediately from the autograph manuscripts of the sacred writers but from copies which in their turn depend on a long line of ancestors. But a text which has come down to us through so many centuries of succes-

sive copying necessarily contains a great variety of scribal errors. Furthermore, the primal text of the Psalms was written in consonants only, some of which bore a close resemblance to one another; in addition, individual words were not separated from one another as clearly as in our printed books. Consequently, copyists made not a few mistakes by confusing similar letters, by combining or dividing consonants illegitimately, and by adding vowels that were not appropriate.

The New Psalter has succeeded in eliminating not a few of these lapses by comparing the Hebrew text with the versions and by an intelligent application of other laws of textual criticism. How the text has been improved in this way may be seen from a few illustrative examples. Psalm 28:8 in the Vulgate reads: "The voice of the Lord prepareth the stags, and he will discover the thick woods." This puzzling sentence is now replaced by the following: "The voice of the Lord contorts oaks and strips forests." The much debated verse in Psalm 109:3, "From the womb, before the daystar, I begat thee" becomes more intelligibly, "Before the daystar, like the dew, I begat thee." More examples cannot be given here; it will suffice to say that all the resources of modern scientific textual criticism have been employed to approximate as closely as possible the wording of the Psalms as it left the hands of their inspired authors.

### *Greater Accuracy and Clarity*

Since the principal author of the Psalms is the Holy Spirit, the translators strove to reproduce their thoughts and sentiments with the greatest precision. As a result, some of the statements in the Vulgate which were difficult to understand either in themselves or in their context, have become lucidly clear. The enigmatic utterance of Psalm 63:7, "Men shall come to a deep heart, and God shall be



exalted" takes quite another form in the New Psalter. "They think up evil schemes, they conceal the plans which they have formed, for the mind and the heart of each are deep." The passage refers to the evil intrigues of the godless against the good; it has no reference to the heart of God, as the Vulgate suggests. Similarly, Psalm 44:14 in the Vulgate implies that the glory of the royal bride consists in internal virtue, but the new version renders correctly, "All glorious, the king's daughter enters the palace." The verse merely describes the outward appearance of the king's bride as she enters the palace in the wedding procession.

A marked advance in clarity has been achieved by the correct translation of the Hebrew tenses. Though there are but two of them, a Perfect and an Imperfect, they cannot be translated mechanically by the Past and the Future respectively, as the Greek attempts to do, without impairing the sense. The New Psalter, on the contrary, gives each tense its proper shade of meaning. Thus in Psalm 42:3 the Psalmist declares in the Vulgate, "Send forth thy light and thy truth: they have conducted me and brought me unto thy holy hill and into thy tabernacles." It is evident from the context, however, that the Psalmist is far from Sion; that he is, in fact, a prisoner in the vicinity of Mount Hermon. The *Liber Psalmorum* removes the incongruity by rendering the tenses more correctly, "May they lead me, may they guide me to thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles."

Other sources of confusion in the Vulgate are the slavish rendering of certain Hebrew idiomatic expressions, the servile adherence to the letter of the Greek prototype, and the translation of some geographical names. Needless to say, these infelicities of translation have been emended in the *Liber Psalmorum*.

#### *Poetic Characteristics*

Another laudable feature of the New Psalter is the care

with which it endeavors to conserve the poetic characteristics of the original. Forceful metaphors and other poetic devices indicative of a vivid imagination and strong emotion are not denatured by colorless or insipid renderings. Thus in Psalm 17:3 God is addressed as a rock, a fortress, a shield, and a tower; the forcefulness of these epithets is much attenuated in the Vulgate. Again, in Psalm 23:7 the New Psalter correctly bids the gates to raise their heads in order that the king of glory may enter; the Vulgate, however, avoids this vivid personification by addressing the command to the princes.

Even the word-painting which is occasionally found in the Psalms has been skillfully imitated in the new Latin version. Conspicuous examples may be seen in Psalm 28, in which a thunderstorm passing through Palestine is described and in Psalm 92: 3, 4, which pictures the tumult of the waves breaking upon the seashore.

The *Liber Psalmorum* also attends to the outward form of Hebrew poetry. The verses are printed in stichs and their combination into strophes is indicated. Repetitions, refrains, and the alphabetical structure of certain Psalms are also made clear to the reader.

### *Improved Latinity*

A quality of the New Psalter which will appeal to many is its improved Latinity. Expressions and constructions which entered the Vulgate from later Latin and from the conversational language of the people have been excluded. Instead, the vocabulary, style, and grammar of the classical period have been adopted, without, however, disregarding the venerable tradition of the Church; for the discarded words and phrases have to a large extent been replaced by others which are classical and which are at the same time found in other books of the Vulgate and the liturgy. Certain

words, however, which have acquired a distinctively Christian meaning, such as *Salvator*, *gratia*, *dilectio*, have been retained, even though the significance attached to them has no support in classical usage. Though classical, the style is not involved; it is simple, smooth, clear, suitable for the recitation of the Psalms in public.

The *Liber Psalmorum* is now available in an American edition (Benziger Brothers), and the liturgical edition will soon be reprinted in the United States. There can be no doubt that the study and use of the New Psalter will contribute much towards a proper appraisal of the unique literary qualities of the inspired lyric poems which it translates so felicitously; it will prove, above all, to be a powerful means towards the attainment of that ideal of spiritual perfection which is ever before the eyes of the devout priest and religious, whose life in God draws so much of its sustenance from the recitation of the Divine Office.

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#### BOOKLETS

*Maryknoll Mission Letters*, Volume I, 1945, contains letters from China, Latin America, and Central America. Besides the usual wholesome mission news, the volume contains many interesting items: for example, the story of a snake charmer, an encounter with a tiger, and how it feels to be stung by a scorpion. Price \$.50. Order from: Field Afar Press, 121 East 39th St., N.Y.

*Let's Look at Sanctifying Grace*, by Francis P. Le Buffe, S.J., contains the substance of lectures given at the Summer School of Catholic Action. It is a clear-cut, systematical, and simple presentation of a difficult and involved subject. Readers will like the homely examples and the naïve diagrams. The first part of the booklet deals with grace; the second part with the sacraments, channels of grace. A small bibliography is suggested. Price \$.10. Order from: The Queen's Work, 3742 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis 8, Mo.

Father Albert A. Murray, C.P.S., informs us that many religious wrote for the booklet, *Holy Hour for Conversions*, after we announced it in our January number (p. 47). He wants our readers to know that the booklets are still available, free of charge. Write to: The Paulist Fathers, 911 South Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.

## Correspondence of Religious

Adam C. Ellis, S.J.

[EDITORS' NOTE: As a number of questions regarding the correspondence of religious have been received by the Questions and Answers Department of the REVIEW, it was thought desirable to publish an article on this important subject. The answers to the questions received will be found in the following article.]

**E**VERY man has a natural right to keep his secrets just as he has a right to hold and possess property. Since man by nature is a social being, it frequently becomes necessary to communicate secrets in writing, and his natural right to secrecy then extends to all such writings. This point is most practical in regard to correspondence or letter writing, and moral theologians tell us that one who reads the letters of another contrary to his wishes violates a natural secret and may sin gravely against justice.

When a man unites with his fellow men in any kind of society, he usually does so in order to share in the benefits to be derived from such a union—benefits which he cannot conveniently obtain by himself but which are the fruits of mutual efforts and of the pooling of individual resources whether these be material objects or the higher and better things of mind and heart. Experience teaches that in proportion to the benefits derived from such common enterprises, the individual members must give up certain rights which are not compatible with the common good aimed at by the society. In a word, if the members of a society wish to share in the benefits which are inherent in the organization, they must comply with the conditions laid down for membership; and these conditions almost always curtail individual rights to a greater or less degree.

Such is the reason for and the source of limitations put upon religious in regard to letter writing. Practically every religious institute in the Church lays down certain condi-

tions for such correspondence, and the candidate who applies for admission implicitly accepts all the limitations and restrictions contained in the rule and constitutions in order that he may share in the benefits to be derived from membership in the religious society.

It will be helpful, therefore, both for superiors and for subjects, to study in detail the rights and obligations of both in regard to this matter of correspondence.

### *The Law and Its Purpose*

Before the Code was promulgated, there was no general law of the Church requiring all religious to submit their incoming and outgoing mail to the censorship of their superiors. Nevertheless, in practically all orders and congregations, this was required by the constitutions or by custom. The *Normae* of 1901, which established the standards of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars for the approval of constitutions of new institutes with simple vows and which were based upon the practice of the same Congregation during the preceding fifty years, contained two articles on the subject. Art. 179 required that "all letters to be sent by the religious, as well as all letters sent to them, shall be given to the local superior who may read them at his discretion. Superiors, however, shall use this faculty with that moderation which prudence and charity dictate, and they are bound to secrecy regarding information thus obtained." Art. 180 stated that all letters addressed to higher superiors (general and provincial), or to the local ordinary, or to the Sacred Congregation, and all letters received from these same persons, were free from such inspection and censorship. These provisions of the *Normae* were incorporated in all constitutions approved by the Sacred Congregation during the past forty years and more.

*The Code of Canon Law*, promulgated in 1917, has only one canon (No. 611) regarding the correspondence of religious. This canon, which we shall consider presently, does not give superiors the right to read the letters of their subjects. Rather it supposes that this right is contained in the constitutions or customs of individual institutes to which it leaves the positive statement of all regulations concerning letter writing.

The purpose of all restraint put upon the correspondence of religious is the same as that of the law of enclosure—to shield the religious from the temptations, the cares, and the distractions of the world which religious have forsaken by their religious profession. There may be no less danger in communication with externs by means of letters than in conversation with them either in the parlor of the religious house or in the homes of secular persons. The religious who has heeded Christ's call, "Come, follow me," has freely renounced the pleasures he might have enjoyed lawfully in the world in order to follow Christ more closely by striving after perfection through the observance of the vows and the constitutions within the security of the cloister. Mere physical separation from the world will not attain this end if religious are allowed unrestrained contact with persons in the world by means of correspondence. Hence it is evident that some kind of restraint or supervision over such correspondence is necessary for the protection both of the individual and of the community.

### *Rights and Obligations of Superiors*

The constitutions and customs of each institute determine what rights a superior has in regard to the correspondence of his subjects. More often, especially in congregations of Sisters and Brothers, the constitutions prescribe what was stated in the *Normae* mentioned above. Let

us take these prescriptions as a starting point. All letters written by religious and all letters addressed to religious must pass through the hands of the local superior, who has the right to read them. This means first of all that the local superior is entrusted with the task of expediting the mail of the community. He should see to it, therefore, that all outgoing letters are mailed promptly after they have been censored and that incoming letters are delivered to the persons to whom they are addressed within a reasonable time. The right to read the letters of his subjects does not impose an *obligation* on the superior to do so, unless the constitutions impose it specifically. Hence superiors are to use their discretion. They should be more careful to read the letters of younger religious since these are in a period of spiritual formation and should be trained to use moderation and prudence in regard to their correspondence both as to subject matter and as to choice of persons. However, superiors may well be more ready to trust older religious whom they know by experience to be prudent in this matter. Such a policy is in conformity with the moderation recommended by the *Normae*. This moderation is to be based on a prudence and charity which will prompt superiors to instruct those subjects who are imprudent in their correspondence, pointing out to them their defects and imprudences so that they may learn the norms of religious moderation. This, of course, should be done in such manner as to avoid giving offense and to convince the subject that the only motive the superior has in checking his correspondence is his own good and that of the community.

### *The Obligation of Secrecy*

All commentators on the subject of the correspondence of religious emphasize the fact that the superior is bound by the natural law to keep secret whatever information he



acquires by reading the letters of his subjects. This obligation binds in conscience and is of its nature serious when the subject matter is serious. Superiors, therefore, have no right to communicate to others information obtained by reading the correspondence of their subjects, nor may they themselves make use of such information except to prevent harm to the religious himself or to the community.

It is the duty of every superior to safeguard the welfare of individual subjects and of the community as a whole. Hence occasions may arise when it becomes necessary to make known to higher superiors information received from reading letters. Whenever this is necessary, the superior may use such knowledge since in taking his vow of obedience according to the constitutions the religious freely gives the superior the authority to do so. Prudence and discretion will be the twin guardians of the secret and will indicate to the superior the cases in which he should make use of his knowledge and the precautions which should protect all revelations of this kind—for instance, not to make known more than is necessary.

Keeping in mind the purpose of all restrictions regarding correspondence, namely, the protection of religious from the temptations, the cares, and the distractions of the world, superiors will more readily abstain from reading letters written by correspondents who have a spiritual outlook and spiritual philosophy of life. This will be the case especially in regard to the correspondence of pious parents, brothers, and sisters of the religious. We believe that, as a general rule, superiors should not read letters received by older religious from the members of their immediate family; and they may also show their confidence in younger religious by not reading such letters unless some special circumstance demands it, as in the case of parents who are opposed to the vocation of their child and who may endeavor to

induce him to return to the family circle.

While it is true that parents and relatives of religious are usually aware that their correspondence is subject to inspection by the religious superior, and that they have confidence in their discretion, nevertheless occasions will arise when they wish to communicate family secrets to their children and to them alone. If they mark such a letter "personal," the superior should neither open it nor read it. If in some rare case he has good reason for suspecting an abuse, he may refuse to give such a letter to the religious to whom it is addressed.

In regard to correspondents of religious who are unaware of the restrictions imposed upon communications by the constitutions and whose letters contain matter which the superior considers undesirable for the religious, the natural right of the sender would seem to demand that the superior should not simply destroy such a letter, but rather return it to the sender with an explanation of the regulations regarding the correspondence of religious and with a warning to desist from sending such letters in the future. Usually it will be more prudent and less offensive to the unsuspecting correspondent to have the religious write him and explain the situation to him.

### *Rights and Duties of Subjects*

To begin with, religious should not look upon the restrictions placed upon letter writing by the constitutions as an unjustifiable restriction of their natural rights, but rather as a wise protection from the spirit of the world which they have freely abandoned in order to serve God more perfectly in the religious life. As they grow older and become more experienced, they will obtain a greater realization of the need to protect their reputation as well as the good name of the community in which they live.

Regularly permission must be obtained to write letters, either for each individual letter, as is usually the case with novices, or a general permission is given which is renewed from time to time. After the letter is written it is put unsealed into the superior's mail box. Similarly all letters addressed to the members of a religious community are first given to the superior before they are distributed. The superior may open them and read them before passing them on to the religious to whom they are addressed. Except for privileged letters—of which more will be said presently—all correspondence of religious is thus subject to the authority of the superior according to the regulations contained in the constitutions and customs of each individual institute. Some are more strict than others, depending upon the spirit and particular end of each institute. While it is true that these regulations of the constitutions regarding correspondence have the same binding force as other prescriptions and normally do not bind under pain of sin, it is likewise true that secret correspondence carried on contrary to the provisions of the rule is dangerous and can readily become sinful.

Religious should learn to be circumspect when they write letters, especially to people living in the world. Consciously or unconsciously such people have a high regard for the religious state, and sometimes their expectations of religious are even higher than are those of religious superiors. They have never heard of the distinction that religious have not as yet acquired perfection, but are in the state of acquiring it. Hence they are not a little surprised, to say the least, to find a religious writing about matters which are worldly, or uncharitable, or gossipy. Furthermore a religious, especially when he writes to members of other communities, must remember that individual communities as such also have a right to their secrets and that a religious

who without rhyme or reason retails local difficulties and happenings which are not edifying offends against charity if not against justice.

### *Exceptions Contained in Canon 611*

All religious, whether men or women, can freely send letters, exempt from all control (*nulli obnoxias inspectioni*), to the Holy See and its Legate in the country, to their Cardinal Protector, to their own higher superiors, to the superior of their house when absent, to the local ordinary to whom they are subject, and, in the case of nuns subject to the jurisdiction of regulars, to the higher superiors of the order; and from all these persons the religious, men or women, can also receive letters which nobody has a right to open. (Canon 611.)

These exceptions may be divided into two classes: letters written to certain *ecclesiastical* superiors, that is, to the Holy See, the Apostolic Delegate, the local ordinary, and to the Cardinal Protector. While the last mentioned is not, strictly speaking, an *ecclesiastical* superior, still he has a special relation to the congregation or institute and frequently takes care of its correspondence with the Holy See. The second class of persons mentioned in the exception are certain *religious* superiors, that is, all higher superiors (superiors general and provincial superiors) and one's own local superior when that superior happens to be absent from the community. Every religious has a strict right to send letters to any of these persons and to receive letters from them and such letters are not subject to inspection.

It may be well to compare the persons mentioned in the canon with those mentioned in the *Normae*. There are three notable differences: (1) the *Normae* did not include the Cardinal Protector, the Code does; (2) the *Normae* included councillors and assistants, the Code omits them; (3) the *Normae* mentioned only the S. Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, the Code includes all the Roman Congregations in the term "Holy See." Neither the *Normae* nor the Code grants the right of free correspondence with

the confessor. The constitutions may, of course, extend the liberty granted by the Code to other persons not mentioned in the canon, for instance, to the general councillors; but unless they are explicitly mentioned in the constitutions, these persons are not entitled to the privilege under the Code.

What is meant by the term "free from all inspection"? The authorized English translation of the canons of the Code which pertain to religious, published by the Vatican Press, translates it by "exempt from all control." The least that one can conclude from the text of the Code is that every religious has the right to send such letters sealed without asking any permission from superiors. Although the literal interpretation of the Latin text of the Code would seem to require that all such correspondence must pass through the hands of superiors, even though they may not open or read them, still the phrase employed in the authorized translation, "exempt from all control," would seem to permit the sending and receiving of such letters without their passing through the hands of the local superior. This opinion was defended even before the Code by canonists who knew the viewpoint of the S. Congregation of Religious and is held today by a number of authoritative commentators. Their reason for this opinion is that otherwise the liberty granted by the Code would be restricted, and religious would not be *free* in such correspondence.

Does this mean that a religious may send such letters through any intermediary whatever, and that he may procure stamps from anybody in order to mail such privileged letters freely? Opinions differ in this matter, and a reasonable reconciliation of divergent views seems to be as follows. Whenever their rights are sufficiently protected by having such sealed letters pass through the ordinary channels, religious should follow this method. Usually there will be no

inconvenience in sending sealed letters to higher superiors through the hands of the local superior. But if the religious has a good reason for not wanting his superior to know that he is writing to higher superiors, especially to ecclesiastical superiors, he may mail the letter personally or have someone else mail it, being careful to select a prudent person who will not be astonished at his request. It is customary in some communities for the assistant superior or some older religious to provide stamps for this purpose, and this is a laudable custom. A religious, therefore, who for good reasons obtains a stamp from a prudent person and sends an exempted letter without having it pass through the hands of his superior violates neither the rule nor his vow of poverty. The permission of the Holy See is implicit in the authorization to send such a letter freely. Such cases will occur rarely, and if the restrictions above laid down are observed, there will be little danger of abuses. These can occur, of course, but the fear of an abuse does not take away the right granted by the law. Religious seldom send letters to the local ordinary, much less to the Holy See, without a serious reason; and if it be necessary, these high authorities will curb any excess on the part of indiscreet correspondents.

#### *Letters of Conscience*

As we have seen above, neither the *Normae* nor the Code allow free correspondence with the confessor or spiritual director, and canonists who are intimately acquainted with the mind of the S. Congregation of Religious tell us that the S. Congregation judges that such correspondence can easily lead to abuse, especially in communities of religious women; hence it will never allow the constitutions approved by it to include the confessor among the persons excepted. On the other hand it recommends that superiors use their discretion in individual cases, and grant permis-

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sion for such letters when it is reasonably requested. While it is true that superiors are not bound in strict justice to do so, nevertheless, in certain cases they will be bound by charity to bring relief to the spiritual need of their subjects.

If the superior has granted permission for letters of conscience, he may not read them, nor the answers received to them. This permission, however, does not give the sender the right to mail such letters without the knowledge of the superior. In these cases it is customary to use two envelopes. The letter is placed in the inner envelope, sealed, and marked "conscience matter." This is then placed in an outer envelope containing the address and is put unsealed into the superior's mail box.

If the superior has not granted permission to the religious to send a letter of conscience, and the subject writes such a letter, that letter is subject to the inspection of the superior. If an incoming letter is marked "conscience matter," the superior may not read it; but, as prudence dictates, he may or may not give it to the religious subject to whom it is addressed. If he deems it necessary to refuse to give the letter to the religious, he should return it to the sender unopened, warn him that such correspondence is not permitted and that any such letters sent in the future will be opened or destroyed.

Religious on their part should be reasonable in their requests to send such "conscience" letters, and they should realize that it is preferable to receive spiritual direction by word of mouth rather than by letter. The director is able to ask questions and obtain information necessary to give sound direction, and the religious has the opportunity to ask for further information or advice. Thus he can be certain that he clearly understands the direction given. In a letter, however, a religious may find it difficult to express himself clearly and fully so as to give a complete picture to



the director and to avoid giving a false impression which may lead to wrong advice. It is also possible for a religious to misunderstand or misinterpret the advice given by the director in a letter. Then there is the possible danger that a letter may be lost, or opened by others, or even that it be published.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion it may be well to sum up briefly what has been said on this subject.

(1) The Code of Canon Law does not give religious superiors the right to read the correspondence of their subjects. This right comes from the constitutions of the individual institute or from custom, and is strictly limited by them.

(2) The superior who has the right and the duty of inspecting the correspondence of his subjects is strictly bound by the natural law of secrecy in regard to the contents of such correspondence. He may refuse to send out certain letters written by religious, and he may refuse to deliver undesirable letters addressed to religious, but if he has read them he is bound to secrecy in regard to their contents.

(3) Canon 611 gives the religious the right to correspond freely with certain ecclesiastical and religious superiors. Such letters are free from all inspection on the part of superiors, as are all replies received to them. Superiors may neither open nor read such letters.

(4) Normally religious should mail such exempt letters after they have sealed them, through their superiors. For a good reason, however, religious may get stamps from a prudent person and mail such letters directly without the knowledge of their superior.

(5) As to letters of conscience, they are not encouraged, and may not be sent or received without the permis-

sion of the superior. However, once permission is granted for such letters, the superior may neither open nor read them or the replies received to them.

(6) In regard to ordinary letters received by religious, superiors should be moderate in the use of the powers granted to them by the constitutions. This is especially the case in the correspondence of religious with their parents and near relatives. Superiors should not read such letters when it is evident that they contain family secrets.

(7) When a letter is received from an undesirable correspondent, it will be more prudent for the superior to return it to the sender, or, preferably, to permit the religious to whom it was addressed to write to the correspondent explaining the regulations of the institute in the matter and warning him to desist from sending such letters in the future.

(8) Religious should not look upon the restrictions placed upon letter writing by the constitutions as an intolerable burden or as an oldfashioned restriction of rights, but rather they should consider them as a protection for themselves and their reputation, as well as for the good name of the community in which they live.

(9) Religious should learn to be prudent and moderate in writing letters, especially to people in the world. The latter normally have a very high esteem for the religious life and for religious in general, and they are apt to be surprised at finding a religious expressing himself in his letters regarding matters which are worldly, or uncharitable, or just gossipy.

(10) Religious communities as such also have a right to their secrets, and religious should show their loyalty by carefully abstaining from revealing in their letters any untoward happenings which might not be edifying to members of other communities, much less to externs.

## Why Not Consider Antichrist?

Augustin C. Wand, S.J.

**T**HE theme of the Antichrist has for many Catholics an air of the mysterious, the legendary, and the bizarre. If it is mentioned at all it is apt to be shrugged off as unreal and distantly removed. Not even its broad outlines and salient features enter into the thought and life either of the ordinary Christian or of the seeker for the higher things of the Spirit. It is, as it were, taboo among serious Christians, whilst the rationalist critics treat it as a bit of "folk-lore."

Yet it was not always thus. The Fathers of the Church abound in direct statements and in allusions to the person and the career of this opponent of Christ. The earliest of these found a well developed tradition on the subject among the Jews, as a careful study of the so-called Old Testament Apocrypha has shown. This tradition was somewhat clarified and fixed by St. Paul and St. John. From these writers we can see that in its primary and proper sense Antichrist is a definite person in whom hatred for Christ and opposition to His work is, as it were, personified. The term "Antichrist" is not a proper name but a descriptive expression for which also several other words are used. St. Paul tells the Thessalonians in his second letter that before Christ's return another person will appear who leads a great rebellion against God and tries to be treated as God himself. A great deceiver himself, he is likewise equipped by the devil with great powers for working "signs and lying wonders," so that many who are incautious and overconfident in themselves will be seriously misled. After having had his way in working evil for a

time this great seducer will be overcome by Christ (II Thess. 2:3-12). St. John gives us the name Antichrist and tells about the helpers and the spirit of this terrifying individual (I John 2:18-22; 4:3; II John, 7). These are the main traits which the New Testament writers have left us regarding the career of the man whom St. Paul names the "man of sin" and the "son of perdition."

Aided and directed by these and other revelations the early Christian writers dwelt often and at length on the subject in learned works, in sermons to the people, in commentaries on the Scriptures, and in poetical compositions. Already in the *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles* and in the so-called *Epistle of Barnabas*, in St. Justin, in Irenaeus, and in Tertullian numerous allusions to Antichrist are found and lessons are drawn from the theme. In the third century St. Hippolytus wrote a special treatise on the subject. He also spoke at length on it in his *Commentary on Daniel*, as did St. Jerome and Theodoretus. Victorinus of Pettau enlarged on it when interpreting the Apocalypse, St. Gregory the Great when explaining the Book of Job, Rhabanus Maurus when handling the Book of Judges and the epistles of St. Paul. The poet Commodian and the rhetorician Lactantius spin long passages, filling in from the sibyls and other apocryphal sources. The theme was, therefore, a familiar one during the whole of the patristic times.

The subject thus bequeathed to the Middle Ages furnished a stimulating topic for the vivid imagination of those stirring times. About the middle of the tenth century the abbot Adso wrote a tract for the queen Gerberga. In the main this repeated the traditional teaching but it added also a few sibylline verses. Two centuries later we find a *Ludus de Antichristo*, showing that drama had seized upon the subject. About the same time another movement started which was to have fateful consequences.

The abbot Joachim of Flora thought to find the various epochs of the history of the Church depicted in the successive visions and figures of the Apocalypse. The spark thus lighted soon caused a conflagration. During the religious controversies of the late Middle Ages feelings ran high. Some followers of Joachim thought to find Antichrist in this or that pope of the time. Wycliffe and Huss carried this tendency to new extremes. Along these paths the sixteenth-century reformers went to greater lengths. From Luther onwards the cry resounded that "the Pope is Antichrist." Thus it continued with greater or less insistence until well into the nineteenth century. John Henry Newman, while still an Anglican, wrote a lengthy essay in which he surveyed the history of this party cry and acutely pointed out the baleful conclusions that might be drawn from such a slogan.<sup>1</sup>

The din of this noisy campaign has, perhaps, led Catholics to fight shy of the subject of Antichrist. It is true that such leading theologians as Suarez, Bellarmine, and Lessius wrote learned treatises on the subject; but these did not reach the people and the later Scholastics soon forgot about them. So we find that preachers and spiritual writers, compilers of meditation books, and even at times the authors of theological textbooks have had little or nothing to say concerning Antichrist and the lessons that can be drawn from the subject.

At the same time rationalists have seized upon the theme and have enervated it by their speculations. For them it is a bit of curious folk-lore. Its roots they trace to the ancient mythologies and its development is explained through various fortuitous happenings. Nothing supernatural has entered into this strange and curious story. So

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<sup>1</sup>J. H. Newman, *Essays Critical and Historical* II, 112-185.

much have these critics had the field to themselves that Bousset, a leader in this investigation, has not found it worth while, either in his book or in several larger treatises in encyclopedias, to mention that there is another conception of this phenomenon.

Yet Catholics should bear in mind that, if God found it worth while to make a revelation concerning events that are to precede the second coming of Christ, He did this for a definite and serious purpose. Cardinal Newman remarks on this subject:

If dreadful scenes still await the Church, if they have been foretold, and foretold that Christians may be prepared for them, no calamity can be greater than a belief that they have already been fulfilled, and that there is nothing to look out for or to fear; no device of Satan can be more crafty than to make us think that they are not to come.<sup>2</sup>

The tone with which our Lord, St. Paul, and St. John spoke was that of serious concern. Difficulties there are in understanding their language and obscurities remain but, as Father Martindale remarks, "The upshot . . . is not to make us careless. We have to obey the reiterated command—to Watch. . . . We have . . . [not to] lap ourselves in false security precisely because [the horrible revelation] has not come."<sup>3</sup>

The fullest and clearest statement of the doctrine on Antichrist, though the term is not mentioned, is contained in the second epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (2:3-12), which has already been summarized. However we are warned in the very text that the teaching is not meant to be clear on all points. St. John uses the term Antichrist and gives some additional points in his epistles (I, 2:18-22; 4:3; II:7). Yet he speaks more about the followers of Antichrist than about the leader himself. The Apoca-

<sup>2</sup>—I. c. p. 113 f.

<sup>3</sup>C. C. Martindale, *Antichrist*, p. 24.

lypse of St. John certainly has some matters that belong to the subject of Antichrist but the use of this book is beset with difficulties and calls for the guidance of an experienced hand.

The Fathers of the Church often spoke at length on the subject. However in reading them a few cautions will be needed. Most of them stood too near to the Roman Empire to disengage themselves from the thought that the fate of the world and of the Church was bound up with the destiny of that grand old institution. As is often the case with prophecy, the course of events has helped to clarify the meaning to a certain extent: we now know that Rome has passed and still the great conflict has not come to an end. Our vision has been directed to a more distant future but that does not impair the absolute truth of the prediction. Independently of any reference to a particular political power, St. Augustine has indicated the prospect in a few terse sentences:

The first persecution of the Church was violent . . . the second persecution is deceptive, such as is now being carried on by heretics and false brethren of every description: the third through the agency of Antichrist is still to come, than which there is nothing more dangerous, as it will be both violent and deceptive. Its force will rest on political power, its deceit on miracles.<sup>4</sup>

Cardinal Newman has summed up the teachings of the Fathers in a series of lectures that will prove very handy.<sup>5</sup> The best introduction to the subject in English probably is the pamphlet of Father C. C. Martindale, S.J., called *Antichrist* and published by the Catholic Truth Society of London.

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<sup>4</sup>Enarr. in Psalm. IX, n. 27: MPL. 36, 128.

<sup>5</sup>J. H. Newman, *Discussions and Arguments on Various Subjects*, 44-108.



## Still Not of This Fold

John E. Coogan, S.J.

**T**HEODORE Maynard remarks in his *Story of American Catholicism* that there still is a "mysterious lethargy" in our Negro apostolate. Despite the heroic work done by individuals and groups, both clerical and lay, the work of winning our thirteen million Negroes to the Church does not seem to get under way. The battle for the soul of the race still remains to be joined; so far all that can be found is local skirmishes. Most of Negro America even today remains absolutely unchurched. The two-hundred and fifty varieties of Protestantism claim something less than one-half of Negro America, frequently to merely nominal affiliation. Negro Catholics represent only some two per cent of the racial group. We Catholics publish slightly more favorable statistics from time to time; but little justification is shown for the reputed rise except that where things are so bad, inevitable change must be an improvement. After all, some are being converted; and it is easy for us to fail to count those who are falling away.

The Church in America has shown in other fields than the race apostolate that, when we really make up our minds, things happen. For example, our Catholic school system taken as a whole, from kindergarten to university, is an achievement without precedent elsewhere. True, it teaches only half our Catholic students; another half still throng the halls of Horace Mann. But the educational achievement of double-taxed Catholics is tremendous. Proportionate success in the race apostolate would recall the mass conversions of the primitive Church.

This statement is the more clearly true because there is

no large group in America that responds so readily to sincere, heartfelt Catholic effort; seldom has fruit hung so ripe on the tree, seldom were fields so ready for the harvest. The mere announcement of the opening of a Catholic school in the corner of an old warehouse in a Negro neighborhood has brought children by the hundreds, eager to be taught the things of Holy God. Last year four thousand children applied for admission to a midwestern colored Catholic school that could accept only one in ten. Another school was forced to turn away six hundred disappointed children for sheer lack of room. During the past summer a nearby vacation school was so enthusiastically attended that the opening-day teaching staff had hastily to be doubled, and yet one-hundred and fifty children had to be sent home. Evidence of whole-souled Catholic interest in the colored brings an explosive response.

The apparent explanation of our slight progress in the Negro apostolate is that the collective heart of Catholic America has not been touched. The Holy Father could say, six years ago,

We confess that We feel a special paternal affection, which is certainly inspired of Heaven, for the Negro people dwelling among you; for in the field of religion and education We know that they need special care and comfort and are very deserving of it. We therefore invoke an abundance of heavenly blessing and We pray fruitful success for those whose generous zeal is devoted to their welfare. (*Sertum Laetitiae*, America Press edition, n. 14)

And in 1942 the American hierarchy, speaking through the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, could say of "our colored fellow-citizens," "We fully appreciate their many native gifts and aptitudes which, ennobled and enriched by a true Christian life, will make them a powerful influence in the establishment of a Christian social order." But the Catholic masses are largely heedless, and little is done.

The eminent non-Catholic Negro historian, Dr. Carter Woodson, has described racial prejudice as Teutonic and Protestant. Dr. Louis Snyder, of the department of history of the College of the City of New York, makes it consequent upon "the division between Church and State during the Reformation and the developing territorial consolidation and rise of national states." In confirmation of these explanations, last year in Chicago the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church thus confessed Protestant responsibility for racial prejudice:

It is a sorry and alarming fact that Anglo-Saxon white Protestants seem to be imbued with more feeling of racial superiority and are guilty of more arrogant snobbery toward those of another color than any other people. The church has apparently not succeeded in inculcating humility in English-speaking whites.

Equal candor would, however, compel Catholics to acknowledge that here in North America, almost alone in all the Catholic world, many of us have become infected with this same intolerant spirit; we too seem to feel that we so-called whites are made of finer stuff, and that the Negro is definitely second-rate. And although we would be willing to go to some expense for the conversion of such a second-rate people living in some remote region of the earth—say in the Congo or Uganda—we do not want many such converts here if they are going to move in on us and use the same religious facilities. We might hear with a sort of mild cosmopolitan satisfaction the story of the conversion of the King of Bungo; but we would not want to have to look past his kinky head to see our parish altar. Africa is the dark continent, the land of the primitives; and America is a white man's country! . . . All right, all right! We'll tolerate a Negro or two on a side aisle of the church, or back near the door. Certainly we understand: Catholic means world-wide, for all. But do you suppose we want Negroes

coming in here just like us? Perhaps in another hundred years; more likely, a thousand. But not now! It's all right to love your neighbor, but we've got to be practical.

This impression of Negro inferiority extends principally to his intellectual and moral powers: "He is a recent primitive, unfortunately dragged from his benighted jungle life into the world of white men with minds sharpened and deepened by two thousand years of civilization. The Negro is mentally in the childhood of the race." This manner of reasoning implies a process of mental evolution, a "transmission of acquired characteristics" that is altogether unknown to science. Presupposing a similar environment, there is nothing that can be taught to a white child that cannot be taught to a colored. In interesting confirmation of this, a Catholic army chaplain, recently returned from Nigeria, reports the native children positively superior in educational performance to his prize parish school pupils in the States. Even the Congo pigmies have been found altogether normal mentally. Professor Ellsworth Faris, of the University of Chicago, declares from personal experience among them that he was impressed by their "keenness of intellect, native shrewdness and essentially high mentality." Obviously a pigmy father—less than four feet tall and weighing about seventy-five pounds—to supply elephant steaks to his hungry family must use his *wits*.

Arguments to African dullness drawn from their crude native culture ignore the ruins of ancient cities scattered about their continent, memorials of their achievements in days when our northern European forefathers were lurking in caves, clad in the skins of wild beasts. It is thought-provoking to find Cicero then advising Atticus: "Do not obtain your slaves from Britain because they are so stupid and so utterly incapable of being taught that they are not

fit to form a part of the household of Athens." The fact is that all isolated areas are likely to be culturally stagnant. Inhabitants of our southern hill country are of the stock that gave greatness to early American life; but, cut off from the busy world, they actually deteriorated culturally. The isolation of the African continent was far more enduring and even more complete. For a variety of topographical reasons, the dark continent is almost impenetrable. When to this is added its long list of fierce animals, poisonous insects, and deadly tropical diseases, it is easy to realize the difficulty of either borrowing foreign cultures or building up one's own.

But in America, we may be reminded, education is free; why has not the Negro risen intellectually to the white man's level, if his innate powers are not inferior? Who does not know that it is only a long lifetime that the education of the Negro has been thus even nominally free? And even now, through the regions of densest Negro concentration, four years of slip-shod schooling are still a fortunate experience. But the fact that Ohio Negroes mentally out-scored the whites of four other states in draft tests for World War I suggests how dependent mental achievement is upon intellectual opportunity.

The whole question of the relative innate mental powers of the several races had better be left to experts. May it suffice, then, to say that the United States Government Advisory Committee on Education reported in 1939,

It is the consensus among America's most eminent psychologists, educationalists, sociologists, and anthropologists, based upon their critical appraisal of investigations of racial differences, that there is no adequate evidence to support an assumption of inferior native learning ability on the part of Negro children.

Even more impressive is the dictum of the American Anthropological Association, the unanimous judgment of

the two-hundred and eighty members present (led by Father John Cooper, Ph. D., of the Catholic University) at its 1938 convention in New York "Anthropology provides no scientific basis for discrimination against any people on the grounds of racial inferiority . . . ."

The second major point of supposed Negro inferiority that we proposed to discuss here is that of his moral powers: "He doesn't seem to possess the white man's powers of sublimation and self-control!" That does sound rather pharisaical, doesn't it? Despite the greater ease with which the economically more privileged conceal their vices, periodic revelations of life in certain strata of white society give one a flashlight picture of an "explosion in a sewer." Confessedly, there is among our colored much vice arising from sheer ignorance; it must be remembered that for several centuries our slave law did not recognize their unions as legal marriage. Frequent shifting of partners was not merely tolerated or encouraged, but often even required. As the competent historian, John Spencer Bassett, reminds us, the Negro slave was a chattel: "He could, according to the popular theory, be bought, bred, worked, neglected, marked, or treated in any other respect as a horse or a cow."

It is precisely the Negro's awareness of the moral damage suffered by his people that makes him hunger and thirst for Catholic truth when once he sees it. Usually the only sort of religion he has ever really known was the emotional kind that enabled him to forget for a time the stern realities of life in a white man's world. It satisfied the yearning to "participate in something bigger than himself," but it offered him little aid or inspiration to more godly living. The Catholic Church alone could offer in its fullness "the way, the truth, and the life," and she usually remained for him either unknown or apparently a "white man's church." And for him she commonly retains that

appearance even today.

Hopes for a racially better day lie largely with religious, especially teachers. We religious can teach young Catholic America—our future priests and laymen alike—what Christ meant when He proclaimed, "I am the Vine, and you are the branches"; and what St. Paul meant when he spoke of a Mystical Body of which we are the members and Christ the Head. And we can show how inevitable then it is that "As you do unto the least of these My brethren you do unto Me."

The Catholic Church is for the Negro—as indeed for the whole world—the only port in the storm. Her emblazoned cross must arrest his wanderings and guide him home. If a naked continent can become for the world's deprived a "Land of Opportunity," then what can not Mother Church mean to an orphan people and a race oppressed? Upon the base of the Statue of Liberty, in New York harbor, the sculptor has carved these lines:

*Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore;  
Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.*

Such is the invitation of America. The invitation of the Catholic Church goes still deeper and promises more:

*Come all you who are weary and heavy laden,  
And you shall find rest for your souls.*

The Negro will come if only our Catholic masses are taught by us to echo the welcome of the Holy Father and of our hierarchy, and to treat him as a brother; he will come with a feeling of proper pride in his human dignity and in the battles he has fought to make it respected. It will be an inspiration for us then to hear him sing in his National Negro Anthem, "Lift Every Voice And Sing":



.....  
God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way,  
Thou who hast by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we  
met Thee,  
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we  
forget Thee,  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

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### CONCERNING COMMUNICATIONS

"Diocesan Priest," who wrote the letter against formalism in the July number (IV, p. 277) has sent another excellent communication. Unfortunately we have not space enough for the letter, but we wish to digest its essentials. Against "Hospital Sister" (cf. p. 355) he defends the action of the Sister who sent the first communication on formalism (cf. p. 132): "She was citing a case where formalism was carried to an extreme, and then put the point up for discussion. Isn't that one of the purposes of the 'Communications' section of the REVIEW?" Also in reply to "Hospital Sister" he points out that the discussion did not concern religious women only; for "Religious Priest" clearly included religious men in his part of the discussion.

Having taken care of these minor points, "Diocesan Priest" goes on to say that both priests and religious do have visitors who call for perfectly valid and important reasons and cannot always choose their own time for calling. Such visitors can hardly be said to be "importuning" anyone. It is possible to treat these people—and others too—harshly by adhering to the word of the rule rather than to its spirit. "Christ could have left the miracle at the marriage feast of Cana go unperformed because His 'time had not yet come,' but kindness and charity for His fellowman were more important . . . Don't misunderstand me. I do not advocate the destruction of all formalism. I imagine that I am only one of thousands of parish priests who really envy religious the order in their lives. I merely agree with the Sister in saying there can be too much formalism."

We regret that we can print only this brief survey of "Diocesan Priest's" letter. It seems to us that his two letters brought out excellent points and manifested a Christlike attitude. It is possible for us religious to become so much attached to regularity that we resent any interference with it, even for a good cause. just as it is

(Continued on p. 428)

## Spiritual Readings from the Council of Trent--II\*

Augustine Klaas, S.J.

### *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*

**S**INCE under the former Testament, according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, there was no perfection because of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood, there was need, God the Father of mercies so ordaining, *that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchisedech* (83), our Lord Jesus Christ, who might perfect and lead to perfection as many as were to be sanctified. He, therefore, our God and Lord, though He was by His death about to offer Himself once upon the altar of the cross to God the Father that He might there accomplish an eternal redemption, nevertheless, that His priesthood might not come to an end with His death (84), at the last supper, on the night He was betrayed, that He might leave to His beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice, such as the nature of man requires, whereby that bloody sacrifice once to be accomplished on the cross might be represented, the memory thereof remain even to the end of the world, and its salutary effects applied to the remission of those sins which we daily commit, declaring Himself constituted *a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech* (85), offered up to God the Father His own body and blood under the form of bread and wine, and under the forms of those same things gave to the Apostles, whom He then made priests of the New Testament, that they might partake, commanding them and their successors in the priesthood by these words to do likewise: *Do this in commemoration of me* (86), as the Catholic Church has always understood and taught. For having celebrated the ancient Passover which the multitude of the children of Israel sacrificed in memory of their departure from Egypt (87), He instituted a new Passover, namely, Himself, to be immolated under visible signs by the Church through the priests in memory of His own passage from this world to the Father, when by the shedding of His blood He redeemed and delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into his

83) Hebrews 7:11

85) Psalms 109:4

rinthians 11:24 f

84) Hebrews 7:24

86) Luke 22:19; 1 Co-

87) Exodus 13

\*Selected from H. J. Schroeder, O.P., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, (St. Louis: Herder, 1941).

*kingdom.* (88) And this is indeed that clean oblation which cannot be defiled by any unworthiness or malice on the part of those who offer it; which the Lord foretold by Malachias was to be great among the Gentiles (89), and which the Apostle Paul has clearly indicated when he says, that they who are defiled by partaking of the table of devils cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord (90), understanding by table in each case the altar. It is, finally, that [sacrifice] which was prefigured by various types of sacrifices during the period of nature and of the law (91), which, namely, comprises all the good things signified by them, as being the consummation and perfection of them all.

#### *Mass Propitiatory for the Living and Dead*

And inasmuch as in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner the same Christ who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, the holy council teaches that this is truly propitiatory and has this effect, that if we, contrite and penitent, with sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence, draw nigh to God, *we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.* (92) For, appeased by this sacrifice, the Lord grants the grace and gift of penitence and pardons even the gravest crimes and sins. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different. The fruits of that bloody sacrifice, it is well understood, are received most abundantly through this unbloody one, so far is the latter from derogating in any way from the former. Wherefore, according to the tradition of the Apostles, it is rightly offered not only for the sins, punishments, and other necessities of the faithful who are living, but also for those departed in Christ but not yet fully purified.

. . . . .

#### *The Real Presence*

First of all, the holy council teaches and openly and plainly professes that after the consecration of bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is truly, really and substantially contained in the august sacrament of the Holy Eucharist under the

88) Colossians 1:13

89) Malachias 1:11

90) See I Corinthians

10:21

91) Genesis 4:4; 12:8

92) Hebrews 4:16

appearance of those sensible things. For there is no repugnance in this that our Savior sits always at the right hand of the Father in heaven according to the natural mode of existing, and yet is in many other places sacramentally present to us in His own substance by a manner of existence which, though we can scarcely express in words, yet with our understanding illumined by faith, we can conceive and ought most firmly to believe is possible to God. (93) For thus all our forefathers, as many as were in the true Church of Christ and who treated of this most holy sacrament, have most openly professed that our Redeemer instituted this wonderful sacrament at the last supper, when, after blessing the bread and wine, He testified in clear and definite words that He gives them His own body and His own blood. Since these words, recorded by the holy Evangelists (94) and afterwards repeated by St. Paul (95), embody that proper and clearest meaning in which they were understood by the Fathers, it is a most contemptible action on the part of some contentious and wicked men to twist them into fictitious and imaginary tropes by which the truth of the flesh and blood of Christ is denied, contrary to the universal sense of the Church, which, as *the pillar and ground of truth* (96), recognizing with a mind ever grateful and unforgetting this most excellent favor of Christ, has detested as satanical these untruths devised by impious men.

#### *Institution of the Holy Eucharist*

Therefore, our Savior, when about to depart from this world to the Father, instituted this sacrament, in which He poured forth, as it were, the riches of His divine love towards men, *making a remembrance of his wonderful works* (97), and commanded us in the participation of it to reverence His memory and to *show forth his death until he comes* (98) to judge the world. But He wished that this sacrament should be received as the spiritual food of souls (99), whereby they may be nourished and strengthened, living by the life of Him who said: *He that eateth me, the same also shall live by me* (100), and as an antidote whereby we may be freed from daily faults and be preserved from mortal sins. He wished it furthermore to be a pledge of our future glory and everlasting happiness, and thus be a

93) Matthew 19:26;  
Luke 18:27

94) Matthew 26:26-  
28; Mark 14:22-  
24; Luke 22:19 f

95) See I Corinthians  
11:24 f

96) See I Timothy  
3:15

97) Psalms 110:4

98) Luke 22:19; I Co-  
rinthians 11:24-  
26

99) Matthew 26:26 f

100) John 6:58

symbol of that one body of which He is the head (101) and to which He wished us to be united as members by the closest bond of faith, hope and charity, that we might *all speak the same thing and there might be no schisms among us*. (102)

### *Excellence of the Holy Eucharist*

The most Holy Eucharist has indeed this in common with the other sacraments, that it is a symbol of a sacred thing and a visible form of an invisible grace; but there is found in it this excellent and peculiar characteristic, that the other sacraments then first have the power of sanctifying when one uses them, while in the Eucharist there is the Author Himself of sanctity before it is used. For the Apostles had not yet received the Eucharist from the hands of the Lord, when He Himself told them that what He was giving them is His own body. (103) This has always been the belief of the Church of God, that immediately after the consecration the true body and the true blood of our Lord, together with His soul and divinity exist under the form of bread and wine, the body under the form of bread and the blood under the form of wine *ex vi verborum*; but the same body also under the form of wine and the same blood under the form of bread and the soul under both, in virtue of that natural connection and concomitance whereby the parts of Christ the Lord, *who hath now risen from the dead, to die no more* (104), are mutually united, also the divinity on account of its admirable hypostatic union with His body and soul. Wherefore, it is very true that as much is contained under either form as under both. For Christ is whole and entire under the form of bread and under any part of that form; likewise the whole Christ is present under the form of wine and under all its parts.

### *Transubstantiation*

But since Christ our Redeemer declared that to be truly His own body which He offered under the form of bread (105), it has, therefore, always been a firm belief in the Church of God, and this holy council now declares it anew, that by the consecration of the bread and wine a change is brought about of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the

101) See I Corinthians  
11:3; Ephesians  
5:23

102) See I Corinthians  
1:10  
103) Matthew 26:26;  
Mark 14:22

104) Romans 6:9  
105) Luke 22:19; John  
6:48 ff; I Corin-  
thians 11:24

whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood. This change the holy Catholic Church properly and appropriately calls transubstantiation.

### *Worship and Veneration*

There is, therefore, no room for doubt that all the faithful of Christ may, in accordance with a custom always received in the Catholic Church, give to this most holy sacrament in veneration the worship of *latría*, which is due to the true God. Neither is it to be less adored for the reason that it was instituted by Christ the Lord in order to be received. (106) For we believe that in it the same God is present of whom the eternal Father, when introducing Him into the world, says: *And let all the angels of God adore him* (107); whom the Magi, falling down, adored (108); who, finally, as the Scriptures testify, was adored by the Apostles in Galilee. (109)

The holy council declares, moreover, that the custom that this sublime and venerable sacrament be celebrated with special veneration and solemnity every year on a fixed festival day, and that it be borne reverently and with honor in processions through the streets and public places, was very piously and religiously introduced into the Church of God. For it is most reasonable that some days be set aside as holy on which all Christians may with special and unusual demonstration testify that their minds are grateful to and mindful of their common Lord and Redeemer for so ineffable and truly divine a favor whereby the victory and triumph of His death are shown forth. And thus indeed did it behoove the victorious truth to celebrate a triumph over falsehood and heresy, that in the sight of so much splendor and in the midst of so great joy of the universal Church, her enemies may either vanish weakened and broken, or, overcome with shame and confounded, may at length repent.

### *Worthy Reception*

If it is unbecoming for anyone to approach any of the sacred functions except in a spirit of piety, assuredly, the more the holiness and divinity of this heavenly sacrament are understood by a Christian, the more diligently ought he to give heed lest he receive it without great reverence and holiness, especially when we read those terrifying words of the Apostle: *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth*

106) Matthew 26:26

108) Matthew 2:11

109) Matthew 28:17;

107) Hebrews 1:6

Luke 24:52

*and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.* (110) Wherefore, he who would communicate, must recall to mind his precept: *Let a man prove himself.* (111)

### *Three Ways of Receiving the Holy Eucharist*

As to the use of this holy sacrament, our Fathers have rightly and wisely distinguished three ways of receiving it. They have taught that some receive it sacramentally only, as sinners; others spiritually only, namely, those who eating in desire the heavenly bread set before them, are by a lively *faith which worketh by charity* (112) made sensible of its fruit and usefulness; while the third class receives it both sacramentally and spiritually, and these are they who so prove and prepare themselves beforehand that they approach this divine table clothed with the wedding garment. (113) As regards the reception of the sacrament, it has always been the custom in the Church of God that laics receive communion from priests, but that priests when celebrating communicate themselves, which custom ought with justice and reason to be retained as coming down from Apostolic tradition. (114) Finally, the holy council with paternal affection admonishes, exhorts, prays and beseeches through the bowels of the mercy of our God, that each and all who bear the Christian name will now at last agree and be of one mind in this sign of unity, in this bond of charity, in this symbol of concord, and that, mindful of so great a majesty and such boundless love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave His own beloved soul as the price of our salvation and His own flesh to eat (115), they may believe and venerate these sacred mysteries of His body and blood with such constancy and firmness of faith, with such devotion of mind, with such piety and worship, that they may be able to receive frequently that supersubstantial bread and that it may truly be to them the life of the soul and the perpetual health of their mind; that being invigorated by its strength, they may be able after the journey of this miserable pilgrimage to arrive in their heavenly country, there to eat, without any veil, the same bread of angels (116) which they now eat under sacred veils.

110) See I Corinthians  
11:29  
111) See I Corinthians  
11:28

112) Galatians 5:6  
113) Matthew 22:11  
114) Hebrews 5:3;  
7:27

115) John 6:56 ff  
116) Psalms 77:25



## "No One but Jesus"

Charles F. Donovan, S.J.

**I**N ST. MATTHEW'S account of the Transfiguration occurs a sentence which could serve as an epitome of the religious life, a slogan for those in the path of spiritual perfection: "*Neminem viderunt nisi solum Jesum*" (They saw no one but Jesus).

Peter and James and John beheld the glory of Christ, "His face shining like the sun and His garments becoming white as snow," and they saw Him talking to Moses and Elias. Then the voice of God spoke from the cloud: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; to Him, then, listen." When the apostles heard this, they fell to the ground in fright; but Jesus touched them and told them not to fear. When they looked up, they saw no one but Jesus.

In its context, this little clause, "They saw no one but Jesus," merely means that whereas a moment before the apostles had seen others conversing with Christ, now He stood before them alone. But taken from its context and considered by itself the sentence can have a variety of spiritual applications. For instance, it can be taken to sum up the single-minded loyalty, the controlling purpose, the unfaltering interest, the clear courageous vision of Jesus, that should dominate our lives as religious from the time of our entrance to the time of our death.

Either of the alternative titles of à Kempis' classic gives the gist and the essence of the way of perfection. The business of perfection is on our part a following of Christ, an imitation of Christ. And as is obvious, if we are to follow the Leader, we must keep our eyes on Him; if we are to

copy the Model, we must never lose sight of Him. All sorts of substitute leaders—fakes every one of them, no matter how attractive—try to win our attention and loyalty from Christ. For a time we may follow popularity or ease or success or human respect. When we do, we are on dead-end roads because we are not following the one Way to perfection. If in the big and the trivial crises of life we imitate Christ, at least to the extent of asking ourselves automatically, as by second nature, "How would Our Lord act or react in this situation?" we are doing much. By constantly appealing to and applying that standard, we are walking in the footsteps of the saints, those who most successfully and undeviatingly saw no one but Jesus.

"They saw no one but Jesus." This motto is not proposed, of course, as a justification for a sort of spiritual escapism, a flight from people and prosaic reality to the consoling company of Christ. It is not a prop for the asocial, or a defense for those who wish to reject community life; because it imports not an exclusive vision of Jesus, but a vision that includes all else in Christ, an ecumenical, all-embracing vision of Christ. If we live up to this ideal, it means that in all our plans and fun and strivings and work, Christ has the leading role; it means that for us there is no interest, no pleasure, no effort, no joy that is not dominated by Him.

When we say that we should see Christ in all men and all men in Christ, that is not just a trick of speech; nor does the phrase recommend a trick of conduct on our part. We are not supposed to play make-believe and substitute the attractiveness of Christ for the irritating or dull personality of our neighbor. We don't have to *pretend* Christ is in our neighbor, especially when that neighbor is a religious, joined to Christ by grace, by mutual choice, and by vow. Christ has told us again and again that He is one with,

identified with, the just soul. Our love, therefore, for our companions, a love of them in Christ and of Christ in them, involves no pretense, no mental juggling. It must, like Christ's love for all of us, be genuine and sincere. It is a love with a particular character upon it, a particular bias, a special core and inspiration. For in all our dealings with others, in our devotion, our service, and our companionship, there is one starting point, one term, one focal object—Christ, our and their Lord and Lover.

"They saw no one but Jesus." This watchword is of application and help in various small but not unimportant by-ways of the religious life. For instance, take that saboteur of the spiritual life, distractions in prayer. We spend the time of prayer planning the day's work (work that isn't half as big to Christ as would be our loving conversation during meditation), or grieving for the visitors who didn't come (visitors whom we left at home, remember, because of our love for Christ), or dreaming of the happiness we would have in a different community (although Christ is in *this* community as well as that, and wants me here with Him). Such wasteful, dissipating mind-wanderings would not bother us and spoil the most valuable part of our day if Our Lord really ruled our heart. We wouldn't be noticing so-and-so's absence, this one's posture, or that one's habit at Mass or other common exercises if our eyes, mind, and heart were riveted on *the* One.

All our life we are going to have trials. We know that. Certainly we didn't enter religion to get away from them, to get a soft life. And it is in trials that our faith, our practical faith in Christ is tested. It's easy to follow Him when things are going smoothly. It's pleasant to walk with Him on cool green Galilean hills. But the particular following that He enjoined involves a cross. "Take up your cross and follow Me." Whatever it is that gets us down, what-

ever happens to be our cross, whether it is sickness or misunderstanding or failure or temptation or our own disposition or an unaccountable desolation or spiritual sluggishness, whatever form our crosses take, we can bear them courageously, even lightly, if in them and through them all we see only Jesus.

Remember those Sisters whom Father De Smet, himself one of God's heroes, was bringing from Europe to America. The boat trip was unusually hard and long (they had to go around South America to reach the west coast in those days) and the poor Sisters began to complain. Father De Smet made this beautiful reproach: "I offered you an opportunity and you are making it a sacrifice." For the moment the Sisters viewed the arduous crossing with natural eyes only. Although they were going to America to work for Christ, they could not see Christ on the way, upon the tossing waters of the Atlantic or of the Pacific. No doubt, after their holy companion's reminder, they saw Jesus again and cried in their hearts like St. John upon other waters, "It is the Lord."

Why do we lose the clear perspective, the selfless purity of intention that was ours on entering religion? St. Thomas More says somewhere that a man who gives up authority and fortune to follow Christ in the way of religious life may soon be striving anxiously for any power he can gain, even if it is nothing more than the high office of tolling the bell. The Sister who three years ago was ready to follow Christ's call to the ends of the earth, whatever the cost in suffering or humiliation, today is disconsolate and bitter because she is given the third instead of the fourth grade. Ambition, rivalry, jealousy, cliques—these ready and time-proven tools of Satan, chillers of fervor, spoilers of happiness for individuals and communities—get a foothold for only one reason: Christ gets pushed to one side, is sometimes

even pushed out of sight. And as the old saw has it, out of sight, out of mind.

Life becomes complicated and tense and emotionally snarled only when we lose that clear vision. The weariness, the fever, and the fret of which the poet speaks are inevitable where little idols of selfishness, false gods of ambition or self-indulgence are set up in the place of Jesus on the altar of our thoughts and desires. Noviceship simplicity, youthful joy, deathbed clarity are ours as long as we remain true to that capitulation to Christ which we made at the start of our religious life. There is but one anchor, one goal, one beacon, one spouse for us—He of whom the Father says, to us as to the apostles, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; to Him, then, listen."

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### Books Received

(From August 20 to October 20)

FREDERIC PUSTET CO., New York and Cincinnati.

*Journey in the Night.* By Rev. Father Brice, C.P. \$2.50. *Heads above the Stars.* By Rev. Giles Staab, O.F.M.Cap. \$2.00.

LONGMANS, GREEN & Co., New York and Toronto.

*The Heart of Man.* By Gerald Vann, O.P. \$2.00.

THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY, Milwaukee.

*The Wool Merchant of Segovia.* By Mabel Farnum. \$2.00. *The Life of Our Lord.* By Sister Jane Marie, O.P., and Sister Anne Catherine, C.S.J. \$1.00

(Paper). *Speech Models.* Selected and Edited by William R. Duffey and Aloysius Croft. \$2.50. *The Religion Teacher and the World.* By Sister Mary Rosalia, Rev. John J. Considine, M.M., and Sister Mary Julian Bedier. \$1.00 (Paper).

### LITURGICAL PROCEEDINGS

*National Liturgical Week: 1944* is a record of the Fifth Annual Liturgical Week held in New York last December. It contains all prepared papers read at the meeting and brief summaries of the discussions. Also included are five papers read at the Liturgical Conference meeting held at St. Meinrad's the previous October.

There is a notable foreword by His Excellency, Archbishop Spellman. A reading list and an index complete the volume, which is published by The Liturgical Conference, 605 No. Michigan Blvd., Chicago.

## Moral Theology for Everybody

Gerald Kelly, S.J.

THE occasion for my present remarks is the publication in English of Father Heribert Jone's *Moral Theology*,<sup>1</sup> which it is my not unpleasant task to review. In writing my review I am taking a cue from the jacket of the book, which commends it to *pastors* "as a quick and convenient means for rendering decisions in cases of conscience," to *young priests* and *seminarians* "to facilitate the repetition of Moral Theology," and to the *educated laity* to help them "in solving many of the minor problems of conscience that occur in their daily lives."

For pastors, for other priests (young and old), and for seminarians who have begun their course of theology, my review can be very brief. Father Jone is a first-class moralist and canonist. In his commentary on The Code (*Gesetzbuch*)<sup>2</sup> and in his one-volume moral theology he has manifested to a remarkable degree the power of selecting important things and of presenting his material in a clear, brief fashion. Not the least of his accomplishments is a wholesome "modernizing" of certain sections of moral theology. For instance, he sketches the pathological obstacles to human activity and he bases his necessarily brief remarks on scrupulosity on recent psychological data. Father Urban Adelman's translation preserves the good qualities of the original German, and his adaptation of certain sections (for example, justice and marriage) to the needs of the American priest is especially commendable. The book is neatly printed and the size is very handy.

<sup>1</sup>See the "Book Review" section, p. 426 for details concerning publisher, price, etc.

<sup>2</sup>This has not been translated into English.

All this does not mean that the book is 100 percent flawless. It has its defects; but my impression is that they are few and of relatively minor importance. For example, a paragraph is out of place in the section on legal adoption; a few opinions seem to be represented as having more value than they really have; and, though the date of the book is 1945, some recent and very important decisions of the Holy See are not referred to. When the book is reprinted it would be well to include an extra page or two indicating the substance of these decisions.

The jacket also recommends the book to the "educated laity." I trust that I am not misinterpreting the word "laity" in assuming that in the context it refers to all who are not clerics and that it would, therefore, include non-clerical religious, both men and women. At any rate, I am mainly interested in the question of moral theology for religious, and I think that this is an appropriate occasion for discussing that topic in something more than a superficial manner. My remarks on the subject will touch upon these four questions: should non-clerical religious know *any* moral theology? how much should they know? and how are they to get this knowledge? and finally, will the mere reading of Father Jone's book satisfy their needs?

### *Meaning of Moral Theology*

Before answering these questions it seems advisable to indicate briefly what moral theology is. An adequate definition may be briefly phrased thus: moral theology is the science of *obligatory* Christian perfection. Moral theology deals specifically with what we may roughly designate as the first two degrees of Christian perfection,<sup>3</sup> whereas ascetical theology, according to the more common opinion

<sup>3</sup>For a description of the three degrees of perfection, confer Father Klaas's article, "Perfection is Union with God," in *REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS*, IV, pp. 259-261.



held today, is specifically concerned with the third degree. Moral theology is the science of Christian *obligation*; ascetical theology is the science of Christian *supererogation*.

"Obligation," therefore, is the moral theologian's sphere. He discusses the commands of God, of the Church, and of civil society that give rise to obligations. He explains the meaning of these precepts, the degree and the kind of obligation they impose, the way they are to be fulfilled, the penalties for violation, and so forth. He examines the subjective side of obligation: the human conscience and all the factors that concern responsibility before God. Under the same aspect—obligation—he treats of the divine and ecclesiastical laws governing the use of the sacraments, the sacramentals, and indulgences.

#### *Value for Teachers*

From this thumbnail outline of the scope of moral theology it is obvious that at least those religious who have to teach Christian doctrine could profit greatly by some knowledge of moral theology. For Christian doctrine includes the Commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, and certain obligations relative to the sacraments. These are moral subjects. Even in presenting them to small children the teacher who knows something of the science underlying them has a great advantage over the teacher whose own knowledge is more or less elementary.

If we consider merely the formal teaching of Christian doctrine, we may safely say that religious, particularly Sisters, are among the most influential "moralists" in the Church in America. They play a most important role in the formation of consciences. "Sister says that's wrong . . . Sister says we must do this,"—how many times have not such statements become principles of action in the lives of children and remained so even through adult life? That is

what I mean by "influence"; and it cannot be denied that religious who teach children exercise such influence on a large scale. And I might add here that I have no great sympathy for the pessimistic, destructive attitude that concentrates on the blunders made by teaching Sisters and attributes practically all the harm of malformed consciences to them. The good they have accomplished is tremendous and far outweighs the harm done by occasional blunders; but this good could be increased and the blunders could be diminished if the religious teacher were given some training in the science of Christian morality.

The moral teaching done by religious is not confined to the religion class. Questions are asked outside of class and advice is sought; and through the answers and the counsel given consciences are influenced perhaps even more than in the classroom. This is as it should be. Religious are not mere instructors; their schools are not merely classrooms. The human relationship between the pupil and the religious teacher is very intimate. If it were not so, our apostolate of teaching would be a very dull one indeed. But with this extended sphere of teaching there is also an extended field of opportunity, and this implies a greater degree of responsibility to be prepared to answer the questions and to give advice.

Since I have touched upon the subject of informal student counseling I may be pardoned for expanding slightly on that topic. Warm, personal relationships between students and teachers are the logical outcome of our system of education. This is true in all spheres: the elementary school, the high school, the college, and—in so far as religious and priests come in contact with the students—even in the universities. It is perfectly natural, for instance, that a high school or college girl should place special confidence in a certain Sister; that a boy should have confidence in a

Brother. And because of this confidence they will refer their personal problems to the Sister or Brother.

The personal problems of youth are, of course, quite varied; but certainly many of them pertain to morality. The question of likes and dislikes, of hot tempers, of character weaknesses, of falling in love, of clean conversation, clean reading, clean thinking, conduct at dances and parties—these are but indications of their moral problems. They get puzzled or worried over their moral obligations, and they will speak about these things to the religious in whom they have confidence. And it seems to me that, whenever possible, the religious should be prepared to answer them. The old cry, "You'd better see your confessor about that," can be overdone. Boys and girls are not able to talk to everyone—nor are the rest of us, for that matter—and it may happen that the only confessor available is someone they cannot "open up to." Hence, at least in those problems that do not strictly require the specialized judgment of the priest and the sacred privacy of the confessional, religious teachers ought to think twice before closing their lips with one hand and pointing to the confessional with the other. In the problems that I have indicated—the ordinary problems of young people—religious who have good judgment and the proper training can give very helpful counsel. But they must have some training, some knowledge of the moral principles to be applied.

It will be noticed that in indicating the personal problems of youth I said nothing about the purely physical aspects of sex. I purposely omitted mention of this because I am convinced that it is a special problem. The parents are supposed to give physical sex instruction; but in defect of the parents religious are sometimes called upon to supply the needed knowledge. A religious should not do this without an understanding with the parents, if they are

alive, and without the knowledge and approval of his own superior. Grave misunderstandings can result from a failure to observe these safeguards. Moreover, not everyone is qualified to give such instruction. Those who do give it should have, not only a knowledge of the subject, but also a wholesome professional attitude. Otherwise they will manifest a morbid interest, or will be crude in their expression, or will blush and stammer—and all these are fatal mistakes in giving physical sex enlightenment.

Before leaving this point of the desirability of some moral theology for teaching religious, I should like to put the matter in a slightly different way. The imparting of moral instruction, whether formally in the classroom or informally in conversation, calls for an attitude that may be characterized as positive, moderate, and objective. The *positive* attitude contributes inspiration; it makes moral precepts appear in their true light, as conducive to beauty, harmony, and peace, and not as balls-and-chain on the feet of joy. The *moderate* attitude steers the middle course between rigorism and laxism; it overemphasizes neither the divine nor the human elements in the life of Christian perfection. The *objective* attitude removes, as the name implies, the blight of subjectivism in moral teaching and counseling. Not what we as individuals think is right or wrong, but what the Church, through her official documents or approved theologians, teaches is right or wrong—that is what we are to teach; and that is the one thing with which the truly objective attitude is concerned.

The attitude that I have just described may be to some extent the result of temperament; but only to a relatively slight extent. It is attained chiefly through correct knowledge and appreciation of Catholic morality; hence the desirability and even need of some training in moral theology for teachers and counselors.

*Personal Advantages*

The preceding paragraphs give at least an indication that some knowledge of moral theology is decidedly beneficial for religious engaged in the teaching apostolate. The same reasons would apply to any other apostolate in which the religious might reasonably be expected to answer questions about moral matters or to give counsel: for example, nursing, and social service. I cannot dwell here on the needs of these other apostolates; but I should like to say a word about the value of moral theology in the personal lives of the religious. In doing so, it seems advisable to deal first with certain objections that are often voiced when the question of moral theology for religious is proposed.

We sometimes hear it said: "Religious lead an ascetical life. They are not supposed to live according to the norms of moral theology." This objection is not as strong as it is sometimes made to appear. The religious life is certainly an ascetical life, a life dedicated to the perfection of the counsels; and as such, the science of it belongs to ascetical theology. From this I am justified in concluding that religious ought to know some ascetical theology; but I am not justified in concluding that they should not know any moral theology. The following of Christ in the observance of the counsels does not free religious from the obligation of observing the commandments of God and precepts of the Church. Religious have the same obligations as other Catholics, plus a host of other duties. The explanation of these obligations is the function of moral theology. Hence, though it would not be correct to say that the aim of the religious life is entirely contained in moral theology, it is correct to say that it is partially treated there. And in so far as it is treated in moral theology, this science can be beneficial to religious.

Another objection which is not at all uncommon runs

as follows: "If you teach religious moral theology you will be teaching them how far they can go without committing mortal sin. And they will take advantage of that knowledge and commit many venial sins they would otherwise not have committed." I might mention in passing that the phrasing of this objection shows a thoroughly negative and erroneous concept of moral theology. However, I will not delay on that here but will merely point out a much more fundamental error in this objection: namely, it shows a complete lack of confidence in religious idealism. If this objection were really true, then I believe I could logically conclude that the religious life is failing in its purpose. For surely the purpose of the religious life is to keep alive in us the desire of imitating Christ even beyond the sphere of obligation; and if even this *desire* is lacking in the majority of us, our institutes have failed miserably.

As a matter of fact, the objection may have some weight in the case of a few; it certainly does not apply to religious as a group. If we consider all religious, we might epitomize the effects of moral theology on their personal lives somewhat as follows: For a certain number, the effect is entirely neutral; their lives are neither better nor worse for the knowledge. In the case of a comparative few the effect may be evil; they apparently abuse the knowledge. Even in these cases, however, I doubt if the knowledge of moral theology lowers their idealism. Rather, their idealism is already lowered, and the newly acquired knowledge helps them to salve their consciences. I believe that if these few had been taught some moral theology while they were still fervent, it would have had no evil effect on them. Finally, in the case of the majority of religious, the effect of some knowledge is decidedly beneficial. They understand their own spiritual objectives better and they are able to discuss them with directors and confessors more intelligently.

They are freed from needless worries; and many of the avenues that lead to scrupulosity are blocked off.

### *How Much?*

Granted that most religious would profit by some knowledge of moral theology, it is quite logical to ask: how much ought they to know? I can hardly give a perfectly exact general answer to this question, but I can indicate certain general norms that might be of service. The first is a negative norm: they do not need a confessor's knowledge. A fair per centge of the matter treated in the ordinary seminary course would be useless for non-clerical religious. On the other hand, speaking positively, it would be very helpful to know: the fundamental principles, with the more practical applications; the main points considered under each of the Ten Commandments; the ecclesiastical precepts of fast, abstinence, and the observance of holidays; the obligations of the vows; the obligations pertaining to the reception of the sacraments, particularly of the Eucharist and penance. That is a general outline. Those engaged in special work might need a bit more. For instance, those teaching in college and the upper grades of high school might well know something about the Church laws concerning marriage; nurses would need special training in medico-moral problems; social workers ought to have an acquaintance with the social aspects of Catholic morality.

### *How to Get It?*

A mother superior or brother superior might stop me at this point with the pertinent query: "Father, I begin to see that some knowledge of moral theology would be useful to many of my subjects, especially the teachers. But please tell me how they are going to get this knowledge." That, in the radio parlance of the day, is the \$64-question; and, since I led up to it, I ought to try to answer it.



Religious can learn some moral theology by reading, especially if the topics are well-developed and more or less self-explanatory. The main disadvantage of this method is that it is too passive; it affords no practice in the actual solving of problems. Furthermore, if the reading is not directed by someone who knows the needs and the capacities of the religious, much time may be lost; and if the reading matter is very technical, erroneous notions may result.

A second method is the lecture system: a professor lectures, and the religious listen. A great deal of information can be assimilated in this way and, if questions are allowed, many practical problems can be answered. But like reading it is too passive. One does not have a real grip on moral principles until one has learned through actual personal effort how to use these principles in solving cases.

When I speak of the disadvantages of reading and the lecture system, I do not mean to say that they have no value. Properly used, they do impart some knowledge and they furnish a general idea of the way moral principles are established and applied to concrete problems. But the ideal method is an *active* class—a class in which the professor explains the main points thoroughly, and the students have time for working problems personally, discussing questions among themselves, and consulting with the professor.

Of course, this ideal method takes time. In teaching Sisters during the summer I have found that it takes two or three 6-week sessions, with a double period each day, to cover the general program I outlined above. And I realize that, considering other needs and the pressure for credits and degrees, very few religious can spare all this time for one subject. Consequently I am not expecting to see religious swarming to summer sessions of moral theology with plenty of time for discussions and problems. But surely a few can be spared now; and there is no harm in hoping and

planning for future programs. As a matter of fact, in the last decade or two we have made great progress in providing various advanced religion courses for teaching religious. Personally, I hope to see the day when a sort of streamlined seminary course—comprising Sacred Scripture, the various branches of theology, and the essentials of canon law—will be readily available for many religious.

### *Father Jone's Book*

What I have said prepares the way for a brief estimate of the value of Father Jone's book for non-clerical religious. The mere reading of the book will undoubtedly furnish much valuable information; it is a *complete* one-volume moral theology. It is a good book for ready reference when one wants *answers* to various problems that are treated explicitly by the moral theologians; and for this reason it is a handy book for the community library. But we should be careful that we do not look for too much from the mere reading of a book like this. Though it does cover all of moral theology, it is only a *compendium*. Its full value can be realized only by one who has had a regular course in moral theology. For one who is just learning it is too brief; so brief, in fact, that, while solving some "minor problems of conscience" it might easily create others. In moral theology, as in other subjects, a little knowledge is sometimes a dangerous thing.

A final word about the value of the book for the laity in general. I believe that the claim of the publisher—that it will help them to solve their minor problems of conscience—is true, with the reservation mentioned above: namely, that the brevity of treatment may create other problems. Therefore, they ought to be in a position to supplement the reading with consultation and discussion.

## Decisions of the Holy See

Forty years ago, on December 20, 1905, Pope Pius X issued the *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*, the history-making decree on frequent Communion. To recall the anniversary, we are reprinting here the nine articles that form the positive and practical part of the decree. The *Quemadmodum* (referred to in article 7) forbade superiors to interfere with the reception of Holy Communion on the part of subjects. The obligation of reading this decree annually (see article 8) no longer exists, as its contents have been incorporated into the Code.

1. Frequent and daily Communion, as a thing most earnestly desired by Christ Our Lord and by the Catholic Church, should be open to all the faithful, of whatever rank and condition of life; so that no one who is in the state of grace, and who approaches the holy table with the right intention, can lawfully be hindered therefrom.

2. A right intention consists in this: that he who approaches the holy table should do so, not out of routine, or vainglory, or human respect, but for the purpose of pleasing God, of being more closely united with Him by charity, and of seeking this divine remedy for his weakness and defects.

3. Although it is more expedient that those who communicate frequently or daily should be free from venial sin, especially from such as are fully deliberate, and from any affection thereto, nevertheless it is sufficient that they be free from mortal sin, with the purpose of never sinning mortally in the future; and, if they have this sincere purpose, it is impossible but that daily communicants should gradually emancipate themselves from even venial sins, and from all affection thereto.

4. But whereas the Sacraments of the New Law, though they take effect *ex opere operato*, nevertheless produce a greater effect in proportion as the dispositions of the recipient are better; therefore care is to be taken that Holy Communion be preceded by very serious preparation, and followed by a suitable thanksgiving according to each one's strength, circumstances, and duties.

5. That the practice of frequent and daily Communion may be carried out with greater prudence and more abundant merit, the confessor's advice should be asked. Confessors, however, are to be careful not to dissuade any one from frequent and daily Communion,

## DECISIONS OF THE HOLY SEE

provided that he is in a state of grace and approaches with a right intention.

6. But since it is plain that, by the frequent or daily reception of the Holy Eucharist, union with Christ is fostered, the spiritual life more abundantly sustained, the soul more richly endowed with virtues, and an even surer pledge of everlasting happiness bestowed on the recipient, therefore parish priests, confessors and preachers—in accordance with the approved teachings of the Roman Catechism (Part ii, cap. 4, n. 60)—are frequently, and with great zeal to exhort the faithful to this devout and salutary practice.

7. Frequent and daily Communion is to be promoted especially in religious orders and congregations of all kinds; with regard to which, however, the decree *Quemadmodum*, issued on the 17th December, 1890, by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars is to remain in force. It is also to be promoted especially in ecclesiastical seminaries, where students are preparing for the service of the altar; as also in all Christian establishments, of whatever kind, for the training of youth.

8. In the case of religious institutes, whether of solemn or simple vows, in whose rules, constitutions, or calendars, Communion is assigned to certain fixed days, such regulations are to be regarded as *directive* and not *preceptive*. In such cases the appointed number of Communions should be regarded as a minimum, and not as setting a limit to the devotion of the religious. Therefore, freedom of access to the Eucharistic table, whether more frequently or daily, must always be allowed them, according to the principles above laid down in this decree. And in order that all religious of both sexes may clearly understand the provisions of this decree, the Superior of each house is to see that it is read in community, in the vernacular, every year within the octave of the Feast of Corpus Christi.

9. Finally, after the publication of this decree, all ecclesiastical writers are to cease from contentious controversies concerning the dispositions requisite for frequent and daily Communion.

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## NEW CONTRIBUTORS

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## Questions and Answers

—47—

What is the proper procedure to be followed by a sick Sister confined to bed who wishes to receive Holy Communion? Should she wait for the chaplain to ask her whether she wishes to receive, or should she approach him through her superior?

Canon 595, § 2 obliges religious superiors to promote frequent and even daily Communion among their subjects and states that all religious who are properly disposed should have the opportunity to receive Holy Communion frequently and even daily, if they wish to do so. This canon applies to sick religious also; in fact, it may be of even greater importance for them. The duty of seeing that sick religious have the opportunity of receiving Holy Communion frequently, and even daily if they so desire, rests on the religious superior. Prudence demands that the sick be given the opportunity to state their wish in the matter. They should not be urged to receive, much less forced to do so, if they do not desire it. The superior should inform the chaplain either personally or through some other religious—the sacristan for instance—as to which of the sick religious wish to receive Holy Communion. Chaplains of religious houses will be only too willing to give what comfort they can to sick religious. But it is not their duty to seek this particular information; it should be spontaneously offered them by superiors.

—48—

Will you kindly inform us how many religious Sisters there are in the United States?

The latest figures available to us give the number of professed Sisters in the United States as 152,159. The authority for this number is the Official Catholic Directory for 1941.

—49—

In some cases our Sisters are paid \$300 each for teaching in parochial schools. In one or two places the pastor has paid in ten monthly installments of \$30. A new pastor has come in one place and has paid only nine installments, reasoning no doubt that the Sisters teach only a few days in the tenth month. Does the superior have a moral obligation to insist on the entire salary?

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Usually the amount of the salary to be paid to the Sisters teaching in parochial schools is determined by diocesan statute. If there be such a statute in the present case, then the superior has a moral obligation to insist that the entire salary be paid. If there is no statute, then inquiries should be made of higher superiors to learn whether any contract had been made with the pastor of that particular parish when the Sisters first began teaching in the parochial school. If such a contract exists, then the superior should insist that the entire salary be paid, as stated above. If there is no contract, the matter should be referred to the higher superior for a final decision.

### —50—

When a professed religious leaves the religious house with the intention not to return, is he excommunicated at once?

According to canon 644 of the Code, an apostate from religion is a religious professed of *perpetual* vows (solemn or simple) who illegitimately leaves his religious house with the intention never to return. Canon 2385 tells us that a religious who is an apostate from religion is excommunicated *ipso facto*. Hence a distinction must be made in answering our question. If the religious who leaves the house with the intention not to return has taken perpetual vows, he is excommunicated at once; but if he is professed of temporary vows only, he is not excommunicated.

### —51—

A religious superior feels that the spirit of the community would be much improved by the addition of certain devotions and religious exercises. How may he lawfully proceed to introduce such additional exercises and devotions?

Religious superiors have no right to change the constitutions or to introduce new customs into an institute. If certain devotions seem to be desirable, or certain religious exercises are considered helpful towards improving the spirit of the community, superiors should suggest the introduction of such devotions and religious exercises to the general chapter. Even the general chapter has no power to change the constitutions; hence it may not introduce devotions or exercises which would be contrary to the constitutions in any way. However, the general chapter has the power of introducing new customs and dropping old ones provided that a majority of the chapter approves.

## Book Reviews

**CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS.** By the Reverend Konrad Algermissen.  
Translated by the Reverend Joseph W. Grundner. Pp. v + 1051.  
B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1945. \$7.50.

Readers of this book will prize it for a variety of reasons. Students of theology will be delighted with its clear presentation of revealed truth in systematic form. Catholic teachers will gain from it a comprehensive view of Christianity in its historical development and vicissitudes. Anyone dealing with converts will acquire from it a sympathetic understanding of non-Catholic points of view. Non-Catholics and all seekers after truth will find it a remarkably intelligible picture of the structure and spirit of the Catholic Church. Perhaps its greatest value consists in the stimulus and directives it will furnish for all Christians who are interested in the apostolate of working, whether by prayer or by direct action, for the unity of Christendom, so often disrupted throughout its history and so terribly lacerated in the eleventh and sixteenth centuries.

The book is divided into five parts. The author first outlines, from a study of the Scriptures, the nature of the true Church founded by Christ. The second part, almost half of the entire volume, shows that the Catholic Church alone is this true Church. The history of the Church is sketched, and the truths of revelation and theology are exposed in an admirable synthesis based largely on Scheeben's *Mysteries of Christianity*, perhaps the finest synthesis of Catholic doctrine ever penned. The third part discusses the separated churches of the East, and the fourth part is a similar study of Protestantism. The book closes with a review of attempts made at reuniting Christendom and a speculation on the prospects for reunion lying ahead.

Throughout his voluminous work Dr. Algermissen combines a clear appreciation of the necessity of undeviating fidelity to Christ's teaching with a sincere charity toward all those whose unhappy leaders sundered them from Christ's mystical body.

The translator is to be commended for undertaking so formidable a task. In general he renders Algermissen well; he is less successful in translating quotations from other writers.

The proofreading could have been more careful. There are



numerous instances of broken type and imperfectly printed letters. Several words are misspelled. In some sentences words have been omitted; a few sentences are ungrammatical. Inconsistencies occur in capitalization and the use of proper nouns. Scheeben's *Mysterien des Christentums* is not a four-volume work, as is incorrectly asserted on p. 366. A statement on p. 543 indicates that Jesuits take only simple vows, which of course is not true.

A lengthy and detailed index greatly enhances the reference value of this excellent vook.—CYRIL VOLLERT, S.J.

**FURTHER DISCOURSES ON THE HOLY GHOST.** Compiled and edited by the Reverend Lester M. Dooley, S.V.D. Pp. x + 212. Frederick Pustet Co., New York and Cincinnati, 1945. \$2.50.

The book contains twenty-five discourses by various speakers, and a bibliography of pamphlets and books on the Holy Ghost. Twenty of the discourses are for adults; five, for children. Though the titles are varied, the theme is very much the same: namely, the *fact* of the divine indwelling and the consequent value of keeping in the state of grace. Preachers will find here a variety of ways of stressing this important truth. The book as a whole is hardly suited to regular community reading, because of the sameness of theme; but it might be helpful to use it occasionally. The same is true concerning its value as a meditation book; to use it day after day, even during the season of Pentecost, would get monotonous. However, I would recommend one discourse in particular for its value as a meditation—"Actual Living with God in My Heart," by the Reverend A. A. Noser, S.V.D., D.D. According to the bibliography, Father Noser has written a pamphlet bearing a similar title; perhaps it contains the same material.—G. KELLY, S.J.

**MORAL THEOLOGY.** By the Reverend Heribert Jone, O.F.M.Cap., J.C.D. Englished and adapted to the Code and Customs of the United States of America by the Reverend Urban Adelman, O.F.M.Cap., J.C.D. Pp. xx + 634. The Newman Bookshop, Westminster, Maryland, 1945. \$3.00.

For the review of this book see Father Kelly's article, "Moral Theology for Everybody," pp. 410-420.

**THE HOLY SACRIFICE: A Practical Commentary on the Mass** by the Reverend Peter Wachter, O.S.B. Pp. viii + 280. Frederick Pu-  
stet Co., New York and Cincinnati, 1945. \$2.50.

Master of novices for nearly thirty years, and later a missionary in the Philippines, Korea, and China, the author has spent his life enkindling a strong love for the Mass in the hearts of his spiritual children. Deliberately omitting "the mass of historical and liturgical details [which] only too often overwhelms the ordinary reader" the author tells us that his method is "to take the words of the Mass and meditate upon them, to see the deeper meaning and the wealth of spiritual truths hidden beneath their surface, and thereby to enkindle in our souls the fire of devotion and of divine life." Hence his book is a simple, unadorned, devotional explanation of the text of the Mass which will appeal to many because of its sincere earnestness. Some may not like the book because of the subjective element which is unavoidable in such a devotional treatise. The many illustrations drawn from various parts of Holy Scripture are, for the most part, apt and impressive. Most of the chapters of this book appeared originally in *Pax*.—A. C. ELLIS, S.J.

**AUGUSTINE'S QUEST FOR WISDOM.** By Vernon J. Bourke, Ph.D.  
Pp. xi + 323. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1945. \$3.00.

In this relatively short book the author takes us chronologically through the works of Augustine and indicates in order the very many personal and external factors that contributed to the intellectual development of St. Augustine and resulted in the immense *corpus* of his writings. It should be noted that this book deals nearly exclusively with St. Augustine and his time. Otherwise, the reader may wonder that so little is said about the great influence Augustine exercised on St. Thomas and the medieval scholars, not to mention the less salutary influence that resulted in the aberrations of Luther and Jansenius.

In the over 1200 footnotes the teacher will find an abundance of bibliographical data and interesting erudition. The two appendices on the chronology of the life of St. Augustine and his writings will be of great value in one's personal study. There is evidence of long and patient scholarship throughout. Perhaps, changing St. Monica to "Monnica" was quite unnecessary, despite the authority of the

earliest manuscripts. Even though this is a book about Augustine himself, one regrets that there is lacking a larger synthetic outlook. This may well arise from the author's jejune treatment of the theology of St. Augustine.

The style, though not at all sprightly, is clear and quite readable. Definitely, one may say, this is one of the very best books yet to appear on St. Augustine. As such it is recommended to all college libraries. Needless to say, the book will hardly be suitable for refectory reading.—MALACHI J. DONNELLY, S.J.

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### Concerning Communications

(Continued from p. 398)

possible for us to become so much attached to various external works as to neglect all regularity. "Virtue is in the middle"—and that seems to be the point that "Diocesan Priest" was making.

It seems to us that enough has been said about formalism. We have a suggestion to make concerning future communications, but before we make it we wish to say a word about some communications we have received and have not printed. One correspondent sent us a 4-page letter about the discourtesy shown to Sisters attending a Jesuit school. Our review is hardly the place for such a communication; the letter should be addressed to the superiors of the university in question. A few other correspondents have sent in "complaints" about various topics. These complaints seemed to us to have but slight value for the generality of our readers; furthermore, it would hardly be appropriate to make our "Communications" section a complaint department. If it is possible for us through articles or communications to point out abuses that are apt to be general and to make constructive suggestions concerning such things, we are glad to do so, and we think that no one can reasonably resent this; but we cannot make our pages the medium for voicing complaints that are not general and that have no constructive value. Communications such as those just mentioned, therefore, will not be printed. A few other communications that we have received will very likely be used next year.

We said we have a suggestion to make; and we have. In this number of the REVIEW we are publishing an article by Father Coogan on the Negro question. Next year we hope to print more on this topic. And we should like to have some really practical communications on the same subject. Perhaps you are interested in the apostolate of establishing interracial justice and you have tried to do something and have succeeded. Or perhaps you failed because you encountered unexpected obstacles. Items like these could be very helpful. We prefer to have such communications signed; but if the senders do not wish to have their names printed we shall of course respect their wishes.

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